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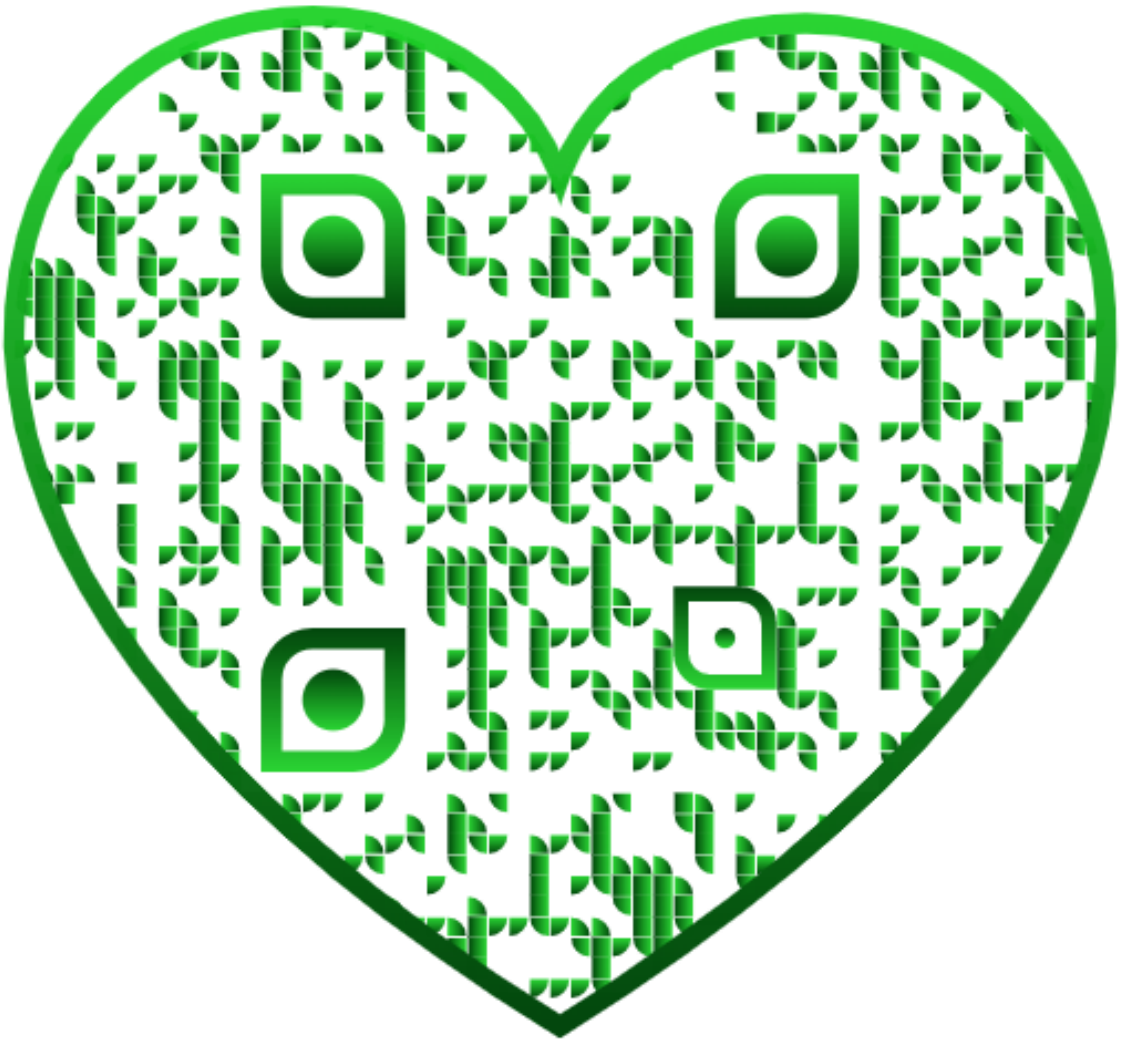

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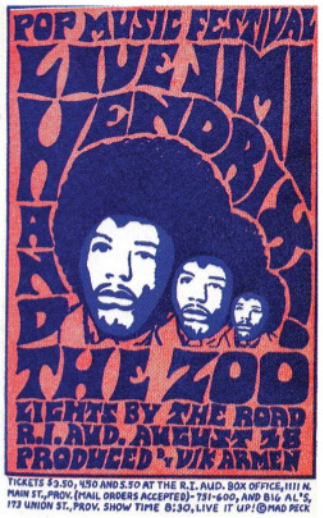
WOODSHED

VOL. 44 | NO. 13 | HOLIDAY 2023

JIMI: THE ULTIMATE INFLUENCER?

THIS ISSUE'S COVER story was inspired by something Michael Astley-Brown, our digital editor-in-chief, said to me back in June, which went a bit like this: "I was reading our feature on 24-year-old Towa Bird, and I was struck by the fact that Jimi Hendrix was the catalyst for her learning guitar. It reminded me that I see this from a lot of younger players of all genres — Hendrix more than any other classic rock artist, with Polyphia being probably the highest-profile new artist to cite him as their reason for starting." Inspired by this, I did some research on my own, which basically involved revisiting more than a year's worth of print stories, and — egads! He was right. The bottom line is, when *Guitar World* — print or online — asks up-and-coming guitarists about their major influences, Hendrix is the most common (or is it commonest?) denominator — that is, once again, in terms of classic, established and/or legendary players.



Why is this, you ask? Who can say! People are gonna like who and what they're gonna like. (How else can you explain the fact that *Taxi* lasted a mere five seasons while *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* hung around for 20?) But it could have something to do with Hendrix's "person ahead of his/her time" vibe, a vibe shared by a select few humans, including Eddie Van Halen, Cliff Gallup, Leonardo da Vinci, Shawn Lane, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Steve Vai and Hans Laube, the inventor of Smell-O-Vision. But we think we did a damned fine job answering the "How?" question, courtesy of Andy Aledort's latest *GW* lesson (with tab and video), "Under His Wings," which starts on page 60.

BTW, I have to say I'm particularly fond of this issue, due to the interesting cast of characters that fill its pages, from Trevor Rabin to the Stones to the Velvet Underground's John Cale to Baroness to Dave Meniketti to Steve Lukather to Mr. Jimmy to Kingfish. Hope you enjoy it! — ***Damian Fanelli***

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CONTENTS

VOL. 44 | NO. 13 | HOLIDAY 2023

30 Y&T'S DAVE MENIKETTI

Why did he turn down Peter Frampton's supergroup offer?

34 STEVE LUKATHER

The melodic maestro on the advantages of not being a shredder — and the wisdom behind releasing full-length works in the age of miniature attention spans

38 TREVOR RABIN

The man behind "Owner of a Lonely Heart" discusses six vintage Yes tracks and six tracks from his new album, *Rio*

42 BARONESS

John Baizley and Gina Gleason concoct a new way forward on the band's latest album, *Stone*

48 THE JIMI HENDRIX EFFECT

Why Jimi Hendrix still matters — and how he's inspiring the next generation of world-class guitarists. Includes an exclusive new lesson by Andy Aledort (with tabs and video)

68 KEEF'S COHORTS

On the eve of the release of the new *Hackney Diamonds*, Alan di Perna explains how Brian Jones, Mick Taylor and Ronnie Wood shaped the Rolling Stones

68

The Rolling Stones' Ronnie Wood [*left*] and Keith Richards (pictured in 1981) point to different *Guitar World* features

TRANSCRIBED

"Disposable Heroes"
by Metallica

PAGE 86

"The Well"
by Marcus King

PAGE 96

"Be Yourself"
by Audioslave

PAGE 101

DEPARTMENTS

13 READER ART/DEFENDERS

15 TUNE-UPS

Boris guitarist Wata, Beach Boys co-founder Al Jardine, the Black Crowes' Rich Robinson (well, his pedalboard, anyway), Angel Vivaldi, Velvet Underground co-founder John Cale, Five Questions with Big Thief's Buck Meek — and the man who would (sort of) be Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page, the amazing Mr. Jimmy! Plus Jon Dretto and Introducing.

77 SOUNDCHECK

77. Fender Vintera II series — two new Telecasters and a Jazzmaster
79. Boss DM-101 Delay Machine
80. Ciari Guitars Ascender Standard
81. Mod Electronics Phase/Off

82 COLUMNS

82. In Deep
by Andy Aledort
83. Tales from Nerdville
by Joe Bonamassa
84. Melodic Muse
by Andy Timmons
85. Live from Flat V
by Josh Smith

95 PERFORMANCE NOTES

110 POWER TOOLS

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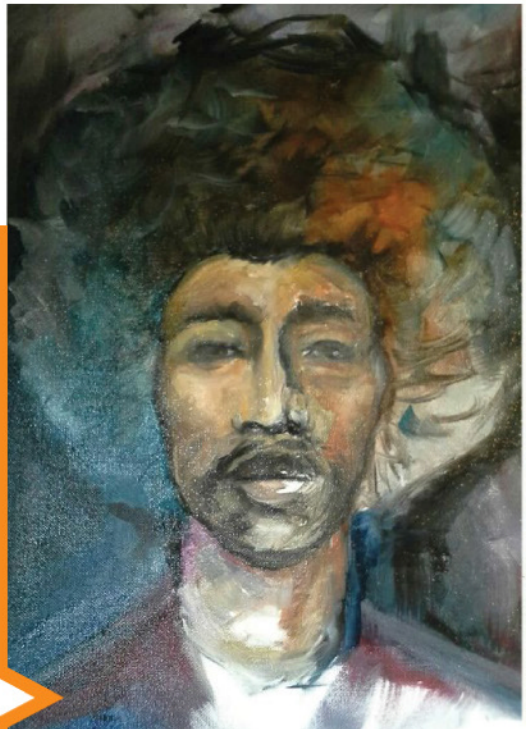
READER ART

OF THE MONTH

If you've created a drawing, painting or sketch of your favorite guitarist and would like to see it in an upcoming issue of *Guitar World*, email **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com** with a JPG or PDF of the image!

And obviously, include your name!



JIMI HENDRIX BY STEVE MACAGNONE

JIMI HENDRIX BY BEN BECKENDORF

DEFENDERS *of the Faith*

Greg McCaffrey

AGE: 54
HOMETOWN: Alexandria, VA
GUITARS: A variety from Fender, Gibson, EVH, Jackson and PRS. Current favorites are my Gibson Les Paul Honeyburst Tribute, Fender American Vintage II Strat and EVH 5150 Deluxe
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Stevie Ray Vaughan "The House is Rockin'," Boston "Peace of Mind," Rodrigo y Gabriela "Terracentric," Rush "Limelight," Social Distortion "Reach for the Sky"
GEAR I MOST WANT: Gibson Dave Grohl DG-335; Gibson Custom 1958 Korina Explorer

Juni Moon

AGE: 58
HOMETOWN: Talihina, OK
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: "Are You Experienced," "I Don't Live Today," "Purple Haze," "Stone Free" and "Voodoo Chile" by Jimi Hendrix, plus "Day of the Eagle," "Too Rolling Stoned" and "Lady Love" by Robin Trower
GEAR I MOST WANT: Jimi Hendrix Monterey Special Edition Stratocaster

Garth Bradley Hileman

AGE: 52
HOMETOWN: Seminole, OK
GUITARS: Peavey Retro Fire, Ibanez CX140, Lotus w/Floyd Rose, ESP LTD AX-50, Cort bass, Jasmine acoustic (all Frankensteined)
SONGS I'VE BEEN PLAYING: Original thrash, early Judas Priest, Black Sabbath and Dio, plus "Almost Human" by Kiss
GEAR I MOST WANT: Blackstar ID:Core 40 V3

Are you a Defender of the Faith? Send a photo, along with your answers to the questions above, to **GWSoundingBoard@futurenet.com**. And pray!

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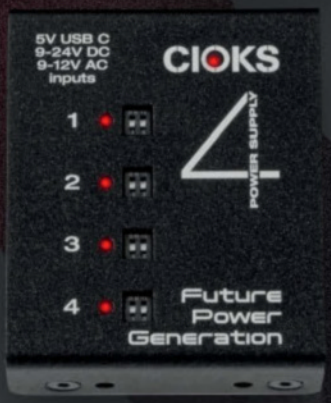

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TUNE-UPS

AL JARDINE 17

RICH ROBINSON 18

20 ANGEL VIVALDI

BUCK MEEK 21

MR. JIMMY 22

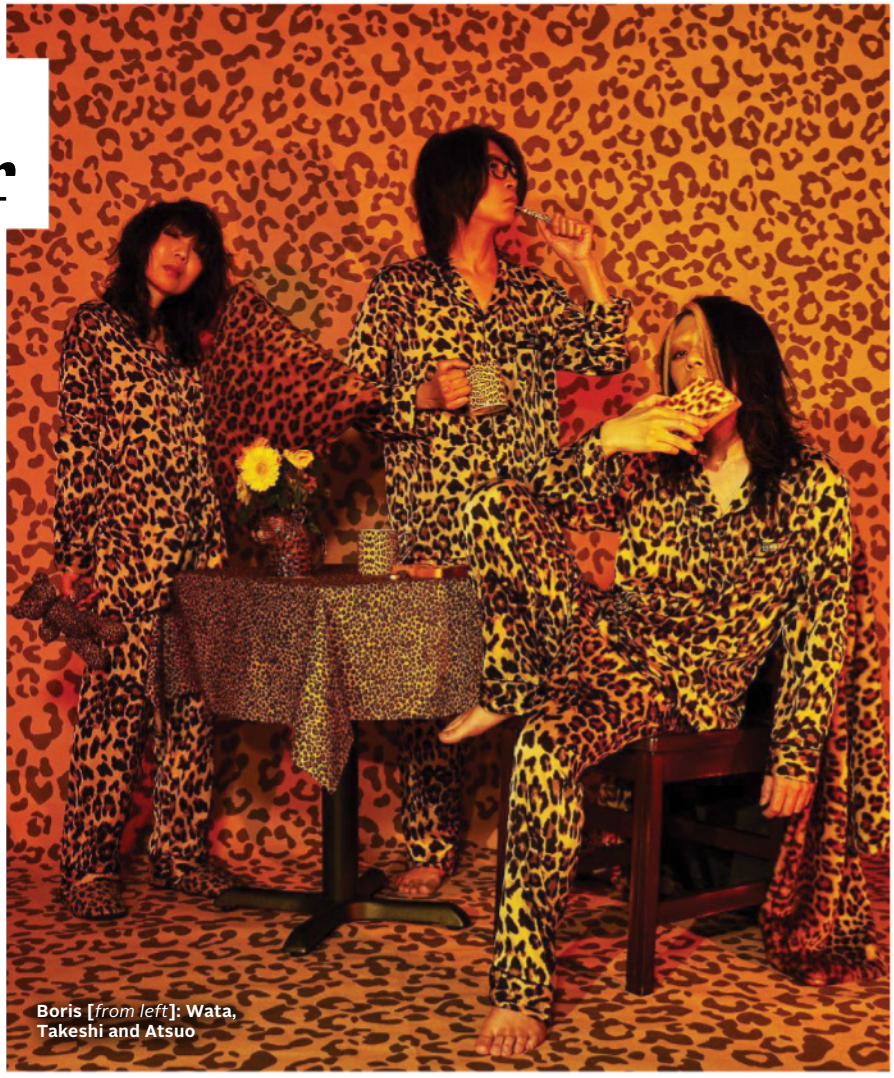
26 JOHN CALE

28 & MORE!

Boris the Collaborator

WATA AND HER IMPOSSIBLE-TO-PIGEONHOLE BAND, BORIS, HAVE TEAMED UP WITH NYC INDUSTRIAL METALLERS UNIFORM. WE'LL LET HER EXPLAIN WHY...

By Andrew Daly



Boris [*from left*]: Wata, Takeshi and Atsuo

PHOTO BY ANOTHER/SIDE PR TRANSLATION BY KASUMI BILLINGTON

FOR MORE THAN 30 years, Wata and her band, Boris, have made a concerted effort to avoid explicit associations with any single genre. And, for the most part, despite critics continually hanging names like "experimental" and "doom" upon the Japanese group's mantle, they've managed to accomplish that feat.

"I don't really focus on continuing to push the limit or keep experimenting," Wata tells *Guitar World*. "This band has occupied a big part of my life and has so much freedom. Each member is irreplaceable, and many things are naturally born from that relationship. Other than that, I'm greatly influenced by people around me, such as people we've collaborated with, people we've met and people whose music I've listened to."

As a guitarist, Wata consistently straddles the razor-thin line between light and shade. That's never been more apparent than on Boris' latest record, *Bright New Disease*. But this time — and perhaps not shockingly — Wata and company have added a twist; they've collaborated with fellow alternative heroes, New York industrial act Uniform.

"Uniform was our support act band in 2019; that's how we met them," Wata says. "As we continued the tour, our friendship deepened, and at the same time, we would relate well to their attitude, way of thinking and perception of music. We were able to perform at the tour's encore together."

Beyond new music, for Wata and her bandmates in Boris, life will continue as it has since the group's inception. Unshackled by the pandemic and still musically explorative, for Boris, the future is bright and the possibilities are boundless.

"Now that the pandemic is over, we've officially resumed tours and live performances," Wata says. "So I'd love to see everyone. I want to perform in cities worldwide for as long as my physical strength lasts. It's all because I get a lot of power from various city sceneries and audiences."

Tell us about *Bright New Disease*.

After touring with Uniform, we began talking about someday making music together. Shortly after, the pandemic hit, and we were immersed in the recording process. Once Boris had recorded about three albums, we naturally flowed into the process of making this collaboration. First Boris recorded the skeletal structure of the songs and sent it to them. We went back and

forth over the internet, sending overdubbing and lyrics and completed *Bright New Disease*.

How does your approach change when collaborating with another artist as opposed to working alone or with Boris?
The method varies depending on the collaborator. We choose the best and most natural approach and create works together each time. It's basically like being guided by sounds that are born and emerge.

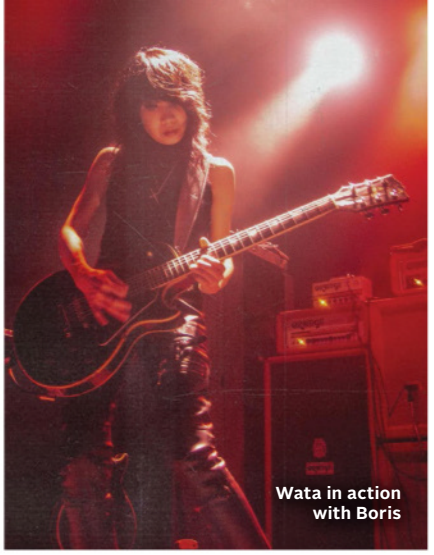
How has your approach evolved from your early years?
In the early days, we'd all go into the studio and work on the details, starting with the riffs. Once the songs were completed and the image of the album was ready, we'd book the recording studio for a few days and record. But starting about 20 years ago, we brought in Pro Tools and started recording ourselves. After that, we'd create songs by having multiple jam sessions (like a rough sketch), as though we were painting multiple layers to complete a portrait. When we think of something, we can record it right away. We have many partially made songs (in the midst of drawing). We'd always done them ourselves, but in recent years we've tried having other musicians or sound producers be a part of the music creation to create additional musical imagery.

How do you feel Uniform's style best compliments that of Boris?
We may seem different on the surface, but their musical experience and knowledge are amazing, and they're extremely fast and great at harmonizing the song's imagery. We expanded the image for the extreme side of music and ambient and new-wave-like music.

> **"Even if there are only a few sounds, I try to play in a way that directly expresses my feelings and touches our hearts"**

You mentioned the surface differences. How did those differences affect the outcome of this album?
Boris designs, records and self-produces, but Ben [*Greenberg*] from Uniform is also a sound engineer; he works on music until it reaches the listener. I learned from producing together that they are straightforward in making sounds and are good at creating sounds that could hurt if you could touch them. On the contrary, Boris is good at making more ambiguous music with more blur. The sound imagery of both types of music became the dynamics of this album and led to the novelty as a whole.

What guitars did you use on *Bright New Disease*?
We have three guitarists performing in this album. So you can distinguish the sound as mine; I used a Gibson Les Paul Custom, which I usually play. For Boris' side of the recording this time, Takeshi played the riffs that would guide the guitars, and then I would add solos and spatial texture to it.


Wata in action with Boris

What pedals and amps did you use?
In live performances and recordings, I always use the Orange amp, an EarthQuaker Devices Hizumitas [*Fuzz Sustainer*] (my signature model) and a Roland Space Echo [*RE-201*]; those are the three main things. I added various pedals this time, but there were many, so I don't remember which. Similar to the guitar I used, I used the same setting as usual, so you can tell that the sound is mine.

Is there a song or solo on *Bright New Disease* that you like most or that best represents you as a player?
In the intro of "You Are the Beginning," I play a solo with long sustain, choking, slides and deep echo with a floating feeling. Even if there are only a few sounds, I try to play in a way that directly expresses my feelings and touches our hearts. Takeshi and Ben also have solos, but I'm sure you can tell the difference once you hear them.

INTRODUCING

Central Blues Co.
Live at Park Street Tavern
(Burning Tree Records)
SOUND CBC are a blues/rock power trio from Columbus, Ohio — but they clearly put the emphasis on blues. More early ZZ Top than Cream, the band's muscular, riff-based songs serve as the launch pad for guitarist/singer Jason Allwood's fluid, supple lead lines that hint at SRV and Bonamassa. With blistering versions of faves from the band's catalog, the new live album serves as an ideal intro.
KEY TRACK "Magic Stixs"

Insensate Machine
War of the Worlds (Bandcamp)
SOUND New York-based, old-school thrash metal that'll excite fans of Slayer and Metallica. The notion of a concept album might seem redolent of the age of angular prog, but with singer/guitarist Billy Davis at the helm, the results are anything but ponderous and introspective. Thunderous bass and drums underpin earthquake-sized juddering riffage and full-shred-ahead soloing.
KEY TRACK "Toxicloud"

Phantom Bay
Underground (KROD Records)
SOUND With the vocals delivered in English — in an accent somewhere between London and NYC — you wouldn't know this band is German. Defying genre conventions, they're unafraid to mix hardcore punk, delivered at maximum speed, with more thoughtful mid-paced stompers. The guitars sound as raw as the vocals for maximum visceral intensity, matched only by the subject matter of the lyrics.
KEY TRACK "Collective Decline"
— Mark McStea

FROM LEFT: SAVANNAH YOHO PROVIDED/PR ANTON BROSGE ANOTHER/SIDE PR (WATA)

INQUIRER
AL JARDINE

THE BEACH BOYS CO-FOUNDER TALKS STRATS, SUPER REVERBS AND THE JOY OF PLAYING THE LATE CARL WILSON'S SOLOS ON TOUR

Al Jardine in action with the Beach Boys in 1975

Q: What was your first guitar?
It was a Stella acoustic that I got when I was a high school freshman, around 14. I enjoyed the rhythm and blues and doo-wop that was prevalent in the late Fifties, and I wanted to play along to the music on my record player.

Q: What was the first song you learned to play?
Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock." Though the song sounds simple, there's nothing easy about that lead guitar break [*played by the late Danny Cedrone*]. To this day, playing that solo correctly has been one of the mysteries of the rock 'n' roll world.

Q: Do you remember your first gig?
It was with my high school folk group called the Islanders. I played guitar and we modelled ourselves after the Kingston Trio. It wasn't really a gig, per se, as we played at a friend's home in Hawthorne, California. And then from that "gig," I began to play bass too.

Q: Ever had an embarrassing moment on stage?
I can't think of anything for me, but I recall an embarrassing moment that happened one Halloween when Mike Love got hit while onstage. We were performing at a university in Malibu, and Mike got hit by an egg that was thrown by an audience member. He ran off stage as he was really pissed off. But we kept playing and he later came back on stage. I guess they didn't like his singing. [*Laughs*]

Q: What's your favorite piece of gear?
Fender amps — in particular, the Super Reverb. That's what the Beach Boys started out with, and they still seem to be the best sound for us and our kind of music. It also has a vibrato pedal, which is really important. I also love my new pedals — a delay and reverb — which sound so good. I've been enjoying playing again because, you know, it's just nice to be able to play "Good Vibrations" with a little delay; it just makes it sound perfect. Although we originally made the sound without the pedal, I'm just embellishing it just a bit now; I just have to learn how to do it right.

> **"Charles Manson actually stole one of my Martins years ago and I never, ever got it back"**

Q: Suppose the building is burning down. What one guitar from your collection would you save?
First it'd be my favorite electric, a Gibson 12-string — then my Martin acoustic, a 1976 D-45 Centennial model. Charles Manson actually stole one of my D-45's years ago and I never, ever got it back.

Q: When's the last time you practiced and what did you play?
It was when I practiced for a couple of shows we did recently in Tucson and San Juan Capistrano, California, using a custom-made Fender Strat. They made the guitar for me personally, and I rehearsed my Beach Boys material on that guitar.

Q: What advice would you give to your younger self if you had the chance?
To learn my scales — because I never learned scales! All I was, basically, was a rhythm guitarist most of the time because [*late Beach Boys guitarist*] Carl [*Wilson*] always played the leads; all I had to do was support him by playing rhythm. But I wish I would've spent more time studying the guitar and learning to play lead, because it's a lot of fun. That's why I enjoy it now; I can play Carl's leads when I go out on the road.

Q: Do you think the art of rhythm guitar is underrated?
Yes. Every group has to have a rhythm section, as that's what keeps it all together. Rhythm guitar is so important — and it's very, very satisfying, too, just to be able to play really nice fat chords, especially when they happen to be "Brian Wilson chords," because those chords are generally very cool. — ***Joe Matera***

FIN COSTELLO/REDFERNS

The Black Crowes' Rich Robinson in Madrid, October 18, 2022

JAVIER BRAGADO/REDFERNS (LEFT) COURTESY OF RICH ROBINSON (BELOW)

MY PEDALBOARD
RICH ROBINSON

WHAT THE LONGTIME BLACK CROWES GUITARIST SEES WHEN HE LOOKS DOWN

Interview by Andrew Daly

"I DON'T FOCUS on my pedals too much. I use them, but in some ways, they're hidden in my sound. The board I have is basically the same one I've been touring with for years. But again, the idea of my board is to give me a boost during a solo or a little extra here and there. I believe it comes down to the amps, and I rely on vintage amps as much as possible.

"I've got the RJM Music Technology MIDI controller [*Mastermind GT*]. It's great and it's functional. Aside from that, I've got my Boss Waza Craft Chromatic Tuner, a Strymon Lex Rotary, a Lehle volume pedal [*Volume 90*] and a Fulltone [*Clyde Standard*] wah. I also have a Lehle Little Dual, which allows me to switch between amps without hum.

"From there, I've got a Black Volt Amplification [*FDR*] overdrive, a Way Huge Red Llama overdrive [*MkII*] and another overdrive, a Free the Tone String Slinger. Then I've got a Way Huge Angry Troll Boost [*WHE101*] and a Strymon Flint [*V2*], which I use for tremolo and reverb.

"I use the various overdrives and boosts for solos, not for the entire song. There's a reason I buy old amps that have tubes, valves and fucking capacitors; they sound great, and they move air. That's the key. You can have all the pedals you want, but the guitar/amp combination makes the sound. Pedals are just some extra paprika."

"You can have all the pedals you want, but the guitar/amp combination makes the sound. Pedals are just some extra paprika"

IF I HAD TO CHOOSE ONE PEDAL FOR A FULL SHOW:
"I guess I'd go with the Angry Troll. I like that I can set it to where it gives me a good lift and boost during a solo. It doesn't have to be overdriven; it just gives a perfect, versatile boost that doesn't overdo it."

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Colonel Vivaldi in the library with a Charvel

Angel Vivaldi

THE VETERAN PROG METAL MAESTRO'S DAZZLING NEW EP HAS BEEN DESCRIBED (BY HIM) AS A SPRAWLING "SONIC ECOSYSTEM" — AND, SURE ENOUGH, IT'S ARGUABLY A PHENOMENON THAT EVERY GUITARIST SHOULD STUDY

By Andrew Daly

"THESE DAYS, I'M much more influenced by events in my life than other artists," Angel Vivaldi says. "If something makes me feel a certain way, I'll let that seep into my writing."

To be sure, as evidenced by his latest EP, *Away with Words: Part 2*, Vivaldi is true to his word. Moreover, the EP continues the New Jersey guitarist's tendency to lean toward the conceptual side of things — but that doesn't mean the EP's five tracks are loaded with bouts of guitar extravagance.

"I often focus on the relationship between the human psyche and my guitar," Vivaldi says. "Each of the five songs on this EP has a unique color. And once I had them in place, I proceeded to my studio in those colors. It's something I also did when I recorded *Synapse* [*his 2017 album*]. Having a concept in mind helps express my artistic expression as an instrumental songwriter.

"*Away with Words: Part 2* is the second part of a yin-and-yang concept that explores taking risks to meet your full potential despite what others expect of you. It's a crime to shortchange yourself to appease anyone. But it's easy to do when you rely on a precedent to put food on your table."

Unsurprisingly, Vivaldi is expressive with his opinions on life — especially as they pertain to his music. Moreover, as an artist who conveys his intentions without the help of words, each lick, chord change and moment of empty space is critical to getting his message across. "Vibrato is high on the list and is the easiest way to tell who is behind the instrument," he says. "I use that often when trying to speak to the listener. But having said that, I feel people put too much stock in vibrato. It's like putting explicit value into one feature on a person's face. There's more to a face than just a nose, you know?"

"People put too much stock in vibrato. It's like putting explicit value into one feature on a person's face"

When asked which of his latest cuts represents him best today, Vivaldi eases back before answering with trademark vigor, "Having delved into various genres over the years, it's nearly impossible to pick just one song. But I'd say 'Six' is the truest song from a compositional, arrangement and melodic sense. It's the one that best shows my 'signature sound,' as they say."

Vivaldi's outlook as he moves forward is positive. Despite the world's ever-shrinking attention span and continued pressure to "assimilate or die," the veteran guitarist isn't buckling. "I'm not bothered by any of that," he says. "Trends signal what not to do for me. I've always stood my ground and firmly stuck to my roots. I have to play from a place of authenticity, or I won't play at all. But it's important to know what people relate to at any moment. Timing and execution are everything."

COSA NOSTRA PR

Buck Meek on stage with Big Thief in Milan, April 23, 2023

5 FIVE QUESTIONS

BUCK MEEK

THE BIG THIEF CO-GUITARIST STEALS THE SPOTLIGHT WITH A NEW SOLO ALBUM, *HAUNTED MOUNTAIN*

By Emma Thumann

"Composing music feels like you're creating and simultaneously solving a puzzle"

BUCK MEEK, ONE of two guitarists in the Brooklyn-based indie rock band Big Thief, has released his third solo album, *Haunted Mountain*, which was inspired by his travels to Portugal, the Swiss Alps and Greece while on tour.

Q: How do you determine what'll become a Buck Meek solo track as opposed to something that might become part of the Big Thief stew?

Typically, Big Thief songs are born from [*vocalist/guitarist*] Adrianne Lenker's writing. She sometimes will bring us an unfinished song and we'll finish it together. But the core idea is that it's her songwriting project, and the same goes for my own project. When we started playing together in 2012, we were co-writing a lot together and we were also both singing our own songs. Then once we put the band together, we decided to split those projects, but we've continued to write songs together.

Q: In the "Haunted Mountain" music video, Adam Brisbin is playing a Gretsch George Harrison Duo Jet and Ken Woodward is playing a Paul McCartney-style Hofner 500/1 bass. Is this accidental or do the Beatles play a major role in your songwriting and image?

I think the Beatles probably influenced all of us, but that's coincidental that we're playing instruments that the Beatles played. They influenced me in regards to harmony. They often used more complex harmony and odd time signatures thrown in for almost, like, you could draw parallels to the way that they composed rock 'n' roll. The way they recorded live together is also a big influence. They're just such a tight band and they're really playful.

Q: How did you play with the theme of love for *Haunted Mountain*? Were there multiple forms that you incorporated?

I think a love song is the hardest song for me to write. Not a breakup song, but an actual love song I've written in earnest — because it's really challenging. You feel like a good love song requires an earnestness, but then it's really easy to be corny. And then there's also platonic love, an old friend you haven't seen in so long, but when you finally do, it feels like no time has passed.

Q: There are two guitarists on the album. How do you decide who does what?

Adam is typically taking the lead role. I generally sing the lead vocals, so I'm typically playing rhythm. The first half of the guitar solo is Adam and I soloing at the same time; I'm solely on acoustic and Adam is soloing on electric. Then for the second half of the solo, he takes over.

Q: How do the locations you've traveled to play with the overall theme of your album?

There's a lot of references to places that have been in these lyrics, which brings me back to this feeling of power when you're in love, or just whenever you're in love. I feel like our emotions inhabit our background, our environment to some degree. In songwriting, I'm always trying to kind of create an environment to inhabit in the song and the emotional content of that song.

ELENA DI VINCENZO/ARCHIVIO ELENA DI VINCENZO/MONDADORI PORTFOLIO VIA GETTY IMAGES

Page Two

NO, HE'S NOT JIMMY PAGE, BUT HE *IS* AN INCREDIBLE FACSIMILE. BEHOLD THE AMAZING TALE OF AKIO SAKURAI, AKA MR. JIMMY

By Joe Matera and Matt Owen

WE ALL HAVE our own favorite guitar hero — that player who first inspired us to pick up a guitar and whose style informed our individual approach to playing. But the sensational tale of Akio Sakurai — a Japanese guitarist who dedicated three decades to quite literally become his hero, Jimmy Page — takes this phenomenon to the extreme.

Sakurai's story is the subject of a new documentary, *Mr. Jimmy*, which charts his journey from aspiring guitar player all the way to adopting the persona of the film's title character — and beyond. But Sakurai's desire to become Page extends far beyond the fretboard; Sakurai adopted the chops, persona and style of Page in an unrivaled display of passion and devotion to his idol. As per the film's description, Sakurai (a kimono salesman by day) dedicated his life to honoring Page's playing, and to do so suitably assumed the role of Mr. Jimmy — his nightly rockstar alter ego of 30 years who recreated legendary Led Zeppelin concerts song for song, note for note, for audiences in Tokyo clubs.

When the real Page caught wind of Mr. Jimmy and took a trip to witness his playing first-hand, Sakurai's life was set on a new wild trajectory that saw him leave his "salary man" job and move to Los Angeles to pursue his dreams of, well, being Jimmy Page. There — as seen in the film — Mr. Jimmy juggles culture shock and language barriers as "Akio's idyllic vision of America meets with reality," with the guitarist joining tribute act Led Zepagain and later auditioning for Jason Bonham, son of drummer John.

"I want to be Jimmy Page," Sakurai says in the film's first official trailer. "To play this music in a lackluster way would be inexcusable... I just want to express the magic of Jimmy Page. That's all."

Notably, the film took nearly eight years to make and features 30 Led Zeppelin songs as performed by Mr. Jimmy. We actually caught up with Sakurai more than a year ago — but we held onto our interview as we awaited word of the film's official release. That time is now. For more info, be sure to check out mrjimmymovie.com. And be sure to stay tuned for more Mr. Jimmy coverage in *Guitar World*.

Where and when did your love for Jimmy Page begin?

I started playing guitar when I was 14, and though I knew who Jimmy Page was, I was too young to understand his awesomeness. I finally understood it all when I turned 17, which was when I pursued the path I am on.

You're able to play every Page guitar solo, including his improvised solos from any Led Zeppelin show. How do you go about finding all the live material and then learning it?

Just by listening to the studio recordings, you can't know everything about what's being played, so I listened to every year's live bootleg version where I would analyze, compare and study; it was in this manner that I'd notice clearly how Jimmy was playing something and in what way he was playing it. There is this shop in Japan; it's like a secret shop with no sign or anything — it's just a door entrance — that sells many Led Zeppelin bootleg versions. The owner of the shop is very supportive of me, so every time a new bootleg version comes in, he shares it with me so I can study it. He also has multiple friends who have ways of getting their hands on bootleg versions, so they also share them with me.

Was it difficult to not only track down the same gear Page used, but also to replicate his sound exactly?

I studied for many years figuring out how to produce the same sound Jimmy Page produced using the 1959 Les Paul Standard in the Seventies — so I use a 1959 Les Paul that's been modified based on my research. It is very helpful to study the real 1959 guitar he used because this gives me clues for

TRANSLATION BY AMI SHIMADA

how to make specific tones with the other re-issued guitars I use. The hardest part of all was to figure out exactly what Jimmy Page's engineers at the time had done to his guitars for modifications. The biggest factor that affects the tones is the pickups, so my engineers and I studied and tried for many years to achieve this. This journey is still continuing; my pickups still get updated every time we discover something new in order to get closer to Jimmy's sound and tones. Just because you have the same guitar doesn't mean it can produce the same sound, as the pickup sound is integral. The quality of each part of the guitar, the pick's material and your picking style — when these ingredients are combined, it helps achieve Jimmy Page's tone.

You also play a signature LS-Jimmy Tokai guitar, correct?
Tokai learned that a Tokai Les Paul was my very first guitar when I set upon my journey to study Jimmy Page at age 17, so they made a signature model for me. As I didn't want to just copy Gibson's original model, I asked Tokai to accentuate the Les Paul's top arch of the body, and all the parts had to be a vintage clone to fit in with the Mr. Jimmy pickups, which are based on Page's.

What about when it comes to Page's Marshall amps?
I use multiple Marshall amps that were made from 1969 to the early Seventies, along with different types of vacuum tubes, depending on what era of Led Zeppelin I'm trying to recreate. With these vacuum tubes, bias adjustments are done by my engineer in Japan to achieve the correct drive level and tones. Additionally, my engineer applied a special treatment onto the circuit on the amplifier that the signal from the guitar goes in. He uses only vintage parts, including a material for soldering made in the same age of the original Marshall amplifier to avoid spoiling its original vintage tone. If I want to achieve Jimmy Page's amp tone from the early to mid era of Zeppelin, the older tubes produce better sound. It's the combination of the guitar, amp and vacuum tube that creates Jimmy Page's sound.

Did you learn the material by slowing down vinyl records?
I used to use tablature, but I started to notice that sometimes there were too many mistakes, so I stopped relying on it and instead started using my ears. Again, it is very important to use the same pickups because it really helps clarify the notes and sounds, so I pay a lot of attention to that. I also use the same instruments Jimmy used for the song in order to also get the exact notes — but it was very difficult in the beginning as it is rare to find the exact instrument. It's also very expensive, but as I became more established, I found it was easier to access the right instruments.

[*both pages*] **Movie stills of Akio Sakurai in *Mr. Jimmy*, including the film's official poster [*below*]**

What was the most difficult piece to learn?
Every song is hard, but the studio version of "Stairway to Heaven" is difficult because Jimmy is playing an improvised solo on that, and to copy that improvisation wouldn't make it an improvisation anymore — it becomes just a copy. The challenge is to make it sound as if it's improvised there and then.

Is it an arduous task transforming into the persona of Jimmy Page?
It's not that I memorize the whole moves and choreography; it's more about me becoming and transforming into Jimmy Page by wearing the same costumes and having the same instruments. Because I studied so much based on the videos and everything, it's like I am performing like an actor on stage where I become Jimmy Page. It's like when you wear a T-shirt or when you wear a suit, you will move differently.

"I asked him if it was okay for me to keep playing Jimmy Page and copying him. He answered, 'Of course!' That was the best day of my life"

Page caught one of your shows in a club in Japan in 2012. How did it feel to be performing in front of the real thing?
I had only ever dreamed of meeting him one day, yet I never thought I'd actually perform in front of him. He had travelled all the way from England that same day so he must have been tired. He was with his friends too, but he never talked to them, as he was completely focused on my performance. I was very nervous at the beginning, but I soon noticed he started bopping his head and moving a little; because of that, I was able to forget my nervousness and enjoy performing. He sat there for the whole two hours and then waited until after the show before he came to talk to me. He asked me, "How did you find out how to make my sound?" I replied, "I just listened to what you did and just studied it."

Over time people had asked me, "If you ever meet Jimmy Page, what would you ask him?" That night, that moment had arrived. I asked him if it was okay for me to keep playing Jimmy Page and copying him. He answered, "Of course!" That was the best day of my life.

PROVIDED/PR

FEATURING ADAM MELCHOR WITH THE HIGHWAY SERIES DREADNOUGHT IN SPRUCE

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John Cale in Los Angeles in 2019. "The idea of AI as a mode of creativity is as intriguing now as it was when Jonathan Demme suggested it as a title for my album in 1984," he says

VALERIE MACON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Still King of the Underground

VELVET UNDERGROUND CO-FOUNDER JOHN CALE DISCUSSES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, HIS LATEST ALBUM, HIS VU AMP PREFERENCES AND HOW HE CHOOSES COLLABORATORS

By Bruce Fagerstrom

"I tend to brutalize electric guitars, so anything I have in my personal stash stays away from the live stage these days"

JOHN CALE MAY have made have made his initial mark in the Sixties as a member of the seminal proto-punk legends the Velvet Underground, but that wasn't the sum of his career by a longshot (His Twitter/X bio cheekily states, "Alright yes, the Velvet Underground... good, next").

As a producer, collaborator and solo artist, he's continued to push the boundaries of the musical avant-garde over the past few decades on soundtracks and albums like 1973's *Paris 1919* and 1982's *Music for a New Society* right up through this year's *Mercy*. The album mixes new/old beats with layers of swirling synths, strings and assorted drones topped off with Cale's rich baritone.

Meanwhile, his groundbreaking work with the Velvets continues to inspire new bands to this day with his slashing, scything electrified viola and thunderous organ and bass playing on tracks like "The Black Angel's Death Song" adopted as tonal touchpoints for countless neo-punk outfits.

Guitar World caught up with Cale via email to ask about the songwriting inspirations on *Mercy*, artificial intelligence and his VU amp preferences.

Some songs on *Mercy* are obviously contemplations about former colleagues and friends, but as an artist you've said you are always looking forward. Many of the songs seem to be meditations on the passage of time and how it impacts personal relationships and their connection with the wider world. Was there a general thematic thrust you were going for?

Originally, the album wasn't necessarily built on any theme, but as time went on, I found I was in a position to be a better commentator of my own work if I just allowed myself to explore what it all meant as it was being recorded. There is genealogy to a song, as much as there is to an album. This album went through many iterations before I landed on the version you're hearing now.

I do believe *Mercy* benefitted from being "in the moment" and being completed at the right time. Everything changed in 2016 with the elections in the U.S.; discourse was no longer on the table. Nothing made sense and everything ugly came out of the shadows into full view. I allowed myself to expose everything in these songs; I didn't want to make them make sense — they

just had to be real and honest. I wanted them to be exactly as they are — sometimes emotionally charged or sometimes angry or convoluted. If I wrote a love song, it's a way to find the heart in the middle of so much pain. Perhaps that's the hope that somehow peers through.

Some bios call you a musician and composer but downplay your vocals, but I'm always struck by how melodically rich they are. Unlike the more straightforward presentation on 2016's *M:FANS*, on *Mercy* you chose to layer them with reverb and add a great deal of depth. What was behind this choice?
My commitment was to embellish and pinpoint the emotion as much as possible. I use effects as a means to advance the immediacy of the emotion.

You've said, "With most collaborations, you put two and two together and get seven." What led you to seek out acts like Weyes Blood, Actress and Animal Collective to work with on *Mercy*? Is it just more fun?
It's definitely more fun but also refreshing to come across other people's means to your own end. All of the guest artists are on the album because they have a uniqueness that belongs to them. I didn't start off saying, "Oh, I want to write songs and make an album with a bunch of guests." It was all very organic when the songs were coming together. I would think, "Hey, wouldn't this be good if Weyes Blood could sing these 'Swing Your Soul' choruses with me — her voice is so pure — and this song is a bit hellish!" I thought about how you play with opposites to mix up emotions.

Actress [*Darren J. Cunningham*] isn't a traditional songwriter, and on "Marilyn Monroe's Legs" I'd started a type of droney dreamscape and thought how infusing his brand of textures along with mine might be an unexpected collaboration. It was strange and perfect. I'd worked with some of the guests before, so there was a high level of expectation of how far we could go — and it didn't disappoint! Everyone continued to inspire along the way.

With the plethora of effects and modelers available, there are endless ways to shape a guitar's sound. When you play guitar of late, or work with collaborators who do, such as Dustin Boyer, do you prefer a guitar to sound like a guitar in the classic sense, or do you view it as more of a sound generator?
I don't think there are only two options here — to use a guitar and have it sound like a guitar or to use a guitar and have it sound like something else. I think there are many shades between the two poles that provide options. For me, the downside for making the guitar sound like the guitar is I don't want to seem as if I'm portraying something I'm not expert in. I'm not a guitar dude. I appreciate anyone who masters their craft and I respect where they feel comfortable. I like to take whatever sound inspires and push it to where I'm comfortable, so whatever that means at any given time is up for grabs.

It's a big bonus with Dustin Boyer; he gets my uneasiness with anything too conventional, he doesn't take offense when I push for something else — he's happy to go there. It's no different than what I've done with the viola. Sure, learn what you need to learn to master the instrument, but in my case, I like to see where else the instrument is able to go. How far can you push it? What else will it give you if you stay curious?

You were musically active in the Sixties when the electric guitar was supplanting the piano and sax as the lead instrument for pop music. That's obviously changed a bit. What's your take on the role of the guitar of late and on your more recent albums?
I'm not a guy who's ever been into that type of guitar sound. Yes, the likes of collaborators like Chris Spedding and Ollie Halsall had a wonderful craziness about them in terms of a more straightforward guitar sound, but even then, it was their level of curiosity that allowed me to get to another place. A learning process, if you like. As much as things go in and out of fashion, it's useless to try to predict what will and won't survive at any given time. Take, for instance, Steve Lacy, H.E.R., Raphael Saadiq; they could one day wind up on "planet Steve Cropper." I'm not hating that!

Artificial intelligence programs in the form of the recently released ChatGPT have been very much in the news. Do you have any thoughts on how AI might play out with regard to composition and whether you think it's good or bad?
The idea of AI as a mode of creativity is as intriguing now as it was when Jonathan Demme suggested it as a title for my album in 1984. Emerging technology will always be exciting and frightening at the same time. As a musician and a composer, I've always lived by the mantra, "Mistakes are exciting because they're inexplicable." I know machines will never replace humans; I don't believe in correction that much.

How did you get involved with Spalt guitars, and do you still find yourself using the Puzzle model?
I think it was an introduction by an engineer friend of mine. When I met Michael Spalt, I was impressed with the beauty of his work; moreover, I wanted to support the young Viennese guitar maker who had to climb the Fender, Gibson and Martin mountains to achieve success. He built a couple of prototypes for me, which I do use on recordings from time to time. I tend to brutalize electric guitars, so anything I have in my personal stash stays away from the live stage these days. I have a vintage Flying V with a broken neck from literally bouncing across the stage at L.A.'s Sunset Junction Festival in Silver Lake. One of the crew was mortified when he realized what had happened on his watch.

On the Velvet Underground's *White Light/White Heat*, "The Gift" bass line has a wonderful, growly tone to it that perfectly complements your groovy, chewy playing. Do you remember if you used a Vox Tone Bender to get that sound?
No, I did not.

Various histories state you were using a Vox Westminster bass amp with the Velvet Underground, which I think must have been the tube-based Vox Foundation amp imported and renamed, not the solid state one later made by Thomas Organ, but please set me straight.
Okay, this one is going to take some brain power here... Let's clarify one thing from the start — we had very limited gear and we'd swap guitars and amps during the live shows, so there's a good chance I played bass through any and every amp to be found. I had a Thomas Organ and a Vox amp (it was definitely a tube amp, but I don't recall it being a Westminster), but I think there was also a Silvertone guitar amp that was spread amongst all of us. My Vox organ was also played through my Vox Super Beatle amp. The last time I saw it was in [*filmmaker*] Tony Conrad's closet!

People fetishize vintage gear, but were you happy with it at the time? And did you use your bass amp with your viola?
Beggars can't be choosers. And yes, I'm sure I put that viola through any amp I could find, including my organ amp. It's all about making something different, so what better way to cultivate a lack of convention than with amps?

You have a time machine and you go back and play some of your current music to yourself as an early Sixties music student. What would that John Cale say?
He'd say, "For God's sake, leave me alone!"

Soen's Cody Lee Ford [*left*] and Lars Åhlund

Soen

THE SEASONED SWEDISH PROG-METAL PROS URGE YOU TO LOOK PAST THE SEEMING SIMPLICITY OF THEIR LATEST, HOOK-FILLED MATERIAL

By Gregory Adams

WHEN SOEN RELEASED their debut album, *Cognitive*, back in 2012, the Swedish band were rooted in a claustrophobically groovy prog-metal subterranea. A decade and some lineup changes later, that approach seems a world apart from the soaring songcraft the act bring to their sixth full-length, *Memorial*. Take the record's first single, "Unbreakable," which solidifies Soen's anthems era with jubilant sing-alongs and hard rock hooks. But even if it sounds like Soen have progressed past prog, guitarist Cody Lee Ford suggests their new material is much odder than you'd think.

"When you listen to parts that seem simplistic, there's lots of weird stuff happening in the groove," he says, pointing to how *Memorial*'s "Fortress" has him and co-guitarist Lars Åhlund chunking above a 4/4 beat with deceptively complex, djenty dexterity. "We're always going to keep these proggy elements alive; it's part of the essence of Soen. It's impossible to stray away from that too much." Nevertheless, *Memorial* is Soen's most streamlined release yet. Åhlund says that since the release of 2017's *Lykaia*, the band have scaled down "from eight-minute songs with a million riffs" to a tightly focused, melody-first approach (only *Memorial*'s closing ballad, "Vitals," crosses the five-minute mark).

Since joining up in 2018, the Canadian-born Ford has primarily employed a spacious vibrato to his lead work. While that continues through much of *Memorial*, the record's most propulsive tempos inspired Ford to tap into a more frenetic form of fretboard expressiveness. "Up until this album, there wasn't really space for the shreddy stuff," he says of busting out the big runs on "Fortress," adding that his love for the late Alexi Laiho — as well as the acquisition of a 27-fret Jackson Wildcard SL27 — factored into the "Floyd Rose trickery" he brought to the track.

Åhlund, meanwhile, prefers a softer touch. He says his role in Soen is often to add "the extra sugar," whether through supportive acoustic strums, textural effects work or synth arranging. Fittingly enough, his spotlight moment on *Memorial* was somewhat of an accident. On "Vitals," the guitarist rolls the volume off his '72 Les Paul's neck pickup to tenderly finger-pluck a few blues-broken bends. This was originally done in service of a vocal line from frontman Joel Ekelöf, until drummer Martin López convinced the band that Åhlund's understated playing was the main course. "It was more like a background feel [*behind the*] vocal line initially. That's why it's breathing that much," the guitarist says.

In true Soen fashion, it's another subtle performance with substantial depth.

"We're always going to keep these proggy elements alive; it's part of the essence of Soen"

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** PRS models and a Fender Strat (Ford); Gibson Flying V, Gibson Firebird, Hagström Fantomen, Siljan acoustics, modded Fender Strat (Åhlund)
- **AMPS** Neural DSP Quad Cortex (Ford); Line 6 Helix (Panama 5150 and 808 Tube Screamer, Greenback 25 and Vintage 30 in stereo) (Åhlund)
- **EFFECTS** Quad Cortex (Ford); Various delays and an occasional phaser, Cry Baby wah (Åhlund)

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"I thought my 20,000 online followers meant something," Jon Dretto says. "But a rep said, 'This conversation starts at a million'"

Jon Dretto

IT TURNS OUT THERE'S A LOT MORE TO THE GUY WHO MAKES THOSE "PRETENDING TO BE A BEGINNER, THEN SHREDDING" VIDEOS

By Joe Bosso

THE NAME JON Dretto might not ring any immediate bells, but chances are you've already seen his handiwork. Over the past year, the 24-year-old New York-based guitarist has racked up more than 100 million views online for his hilarious video series, "Pretending to Be a Beginner, Then Shredding."

In each clip, Dretto strolls unassumingly into a music store, where he elicits smirks and chuckles from clerks and onlookers as he struggles to pick out a few notes on a (sometimes outrageously expensive) guitar. Then in a flash, he lets loose with a dizzying and immaculately played flurry of fretboard wizardry... leaving jaws agape.

"The whole thing's been a lot of fun," Dretto says. "I wanted people to laugh and think, 'This kid is gonna get roasted.' In the end, everybody is in on the joke. I've actually made some good friends at the stores."

Dretto came up with the idea for such pranks after he paid a visit to a "big management company" in Nashville. "I thought my 20,000 online followers meant something," he recalls, "but a rep said, 'This conversation starts at a million.'" Dretto blew past that number in short order, and his most recent video series, "Begging for Guitar," in which he solos vocal melody lines of famous songs by the likes of Adele, Dua Lipa and Lady Gaga, has racked up a staggering 1 billion views across various platforms.

Now that he's amassed a sizable audience, Dretto — who, by the way, is no slouch in the singing department — is beginning to issue his own music. His debut single, "Broken Promise," is a rousing pop ballad highlighted by his rip-roaring soloing. "The response to the song has been fantastic, and I'm going to put out more songs soon," he says. "Ten years ago, I would need a record deal to do what I'm doing, but because of my social media following and how I've structured my career, I don't need a label's capital to fund my music. It's pretty cool."

"The whole thing's been a lot of fun. I wanted people to laugh and think, 'This kid is gonna get roasted'"

Ahh, but the big question: Can we expect more guitar shenanigans videos in the future? Dretto laughs and says, "I don't want to ruin any surprises. All will be revealed in time."

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** Kiesel Aries and A2 models
- **AMPS/EFFECTS** Neural DSP Quad Cortex ("It's got everything I need. I can show up to a gig with my whole rig in a backpack.")

ROB MONK/FUTURE

ADVENTURES OF OZZY & DAVE?

"Ozzy and Sharon Osbourne... were waiting for me backstage. Ozzy asked me to be in the band, but at that point I wasn't even thinking about it. We had just finished doing the *Black Tiger* record [*1982*] and a big tour with AC/DC. I kindly refused his offer and life went on." — *As told to James Wood (2014)*

DAVE MENIKETTI

Y&T's frontman on why he turned down Peter Frampton's supergroup offer — and how Y&T might've been bigger if they just could've opened for themselves!

By Joe Bosso

"**IF YOU OPENED** for us, it was a sure sign you were going to make it," Dave Meniketti says. As guitarist, singer and all-around main man for the Bay Area hard rock stalwarts Y&T, he's seen a lot of up-and-comers breeze by during the late Seventies and into the Eighties. "Van Halen opened for us, and so did Metallica. Poison opened shows for us. As a matter of fact, back in 1981 Mötley Crüe played their first gig ever when they opened for us at the Starwood in L.A. It's in their book."

He laughs and adds, "We used to have a saying: 'We know how we're going to make it big. We have to open for ourselves!' It seemed like there was a time when every band that went on before us wound up going platinum."

For a while, it appeared that Y&T were on the fast track for success. Formed in 1972, the band, then called Yesterday & Today (after the 1966 U.S. Beatles album), went through a few members before solidifying the lineup of Meniketti, bassist Phil Kennemore, rhythm guitarist Joey Alves and drummer Leonard Haze. They gigged around, playing shows with Journey and other local acts, and in 1976, after opening for Queen during the band's *A Night at the Opera* tour, they scored a deal with London Records. The group's first two albums, 1976's self-titled disc and 1978's *Struck Down*, received solid notices but failed to sell.

Shortening their name to Y&T, the quartet signed to A&M records in 1981 and began a stretch of albums that included high-energy gems like 1982's *Black Tiger*, 1983's *Mean Streak* and 1984's *In Rock We Trust*. With each release, the band inched closer to mainstream stardom — tracks like "Midnight in Tokyo" and "Sentimental Fool" garnered significant FM play — but breaking into Top 30 proved to be a code they couldn't crack. Then, in 1985, Y&T released a live album, *Open Fire*, that included a brand-new studio cut, "Summertime Girls." An irresistible nugget of pop metal ear candy, the track was accompanied by a tongue-in-cheek video, full of sand and bikini-clad volleyballers, that clicked on MTV. "It was a real double-edged sword for us," Meniketti says. "After a song like that, you're expected to repeat it over and over, and that just wasn't us."

The group's next album, *Down for the Count*, stalled on the charts, and it would be their last release featuring Haze. With new drummer Jimmy DeGrasso, Y&T signed to Geffen Records and attempted to navigate their way through a music scene now ruled by hair metal. "It was a frustrating time," Meniketti says. "The label could have done better things for us, but c'est la vie — stuff happens." After two more albums, (1987's *Contagious* and 1990's *Ten*) and another lineup change — guitarist Stef Burns replaced Alves — the band called it quits in 1991.

Meniketti took an extended time out from the music industry (he even turned down an opportunity to form a supergroup with Peter Frampton), but by 1995 he was ready to give Y&T another go. Over the next 16 years, the band toured the world with lineups that would, at various points, include

"WHEN VAN HALEN'S FIRST RECORD CAME OUT, I WAS SO PROUD OF THEM — IT WAS

both Kennemore and Haze. Sadly, one by one, members of the classic group began passing away: Kennemore succumbed to lung cancer in 2011, Haze died in 2016 after a battle with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and a year later, Alves died from ulcerative colitis and inflammatory bowel disease.

"It's been devastating," Meniketti says. "I lost my best friend, Phil, and a few years later Leonard and Joey passed. It took the wind out of my sails for a while. But I remember something Phil told me. He was on his deathbed, and he said, 'Don't stop. We've accomplished a lot over the years, and you've got to keep it going.' It was nice that he felt that way. I would have said the same to him if the situation were reversed."

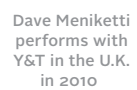
Meniketti himself has faced the prospect of his own mortality. Last year, he revealed he was undergoing treatment for prostate cancer. For a time, he put all touring plans on hold while he underwent radiation treatment. He happily reports that he's been given the all-clear from doctors, and he's resumed gigging, playing limited sets of shows with a new lineup of Y&T that includes guitarist John Nymann, drummer Mike Vanderhule and bassist Aaron Leigh.

"If there's one good thing about being the surviving member, it's that I'm the lead singer, the lead guitar player and the principal songwriter," Meniketti says. "You're still getting the same sound of the voice and the guitar from the guy who wrote the songs. You're getting a lot of what Y&T has always been about."

Y&T always seemed like the perennial underdogs. Do you feel as if the band has been under-appreciated? And how about you as a guitarist? Do you feel somewhat unnoticed?

I don't actually care. Honestly, it's not a contest to me. People say to me, "Y&T should be in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame," and I tell them, "If you want to be an advocate for that, fine. But it doesn't really matter to me." Winning awards has never been a motivator for me.

As for my guitar playing, I get all the praise I need. Other artists say nice things about me, which is terrific. Sometimes it's an artist I don't even know, so I'm especially blown away when they praise my playing. I know I'm not a household name like Slash, and I can live with that. I get all the recognition I deserve.



Dave Meniketti performs with Y&T in the U.K. in 2010

You have quite a bluesy flavor in your playing. Who would you say are your major influences in regards to soloing and tone?

When you're first starting out, that's when your biggest influences hit you. That's certainly true in my case. From the bluesier side of things, I listened to a lot of players. I was a big fan of Duane Allman and Dickey Betts. The same goes for Leslie West; I was way into Leslie. There's a guy who never got the recognition he deserved, in my opinion. There are so many people I listened to and loved — Jeff Beck, of course. That was a sad day when he passed.

What was the Bay Area music scene like in the early Seventies? Were there a lot of great players?

We've always had a very diverse thing happening here. If you went to Southern California, there were a ton of groups following whatever was popular at the time. Here in the Bay Area, we were kind of isolated from that bandwagon thing. It was such a different scene back then. When we first started in the early Seventies, we had kind of our own thing as the hard rock band of the Bay Area. In our genre, maybe the two musicians closest to us were Sammy Hagar and Ronnie Montrose. There weren't a lot of heavy rockers yet, but we had tons of great players.

Was it a competitive scene? It wasn't New York or L.A. It wasn't Nashville. Those were the three big cities for music.

It was competitive, yes. Our first legitimate manager also managed Journey, so Neal Schon and I spent a lot of time together. We played a ton of shows together, too. There was a bit of competition between the bands, sort of brought on by our management. They would tell me, "You should play more like Neal." Funnily enough, they told Neal, "You should play more like Dave." [*Laughs*] Our styles were so different back then. I was more of a melodic shredder, and he was much more into a melodic thing.

You were already a gigging pro by the time Eddie Van Halen made his mark in the late Seventies. Did he have an impact on your playing at all?

I won't say he had an influence on me from a stylistic standpoint; I had kind of cemented my style at that time. Van Halen opened up for us at the Starwood in L.A. I think they got signed soon after. That was the first time we saw them; they played four shows with us. We sat there and watched Eddie, and of course, his playing was completely different from what anybody else was doing on the guitar. I thought it was really interesting and cool. When their first record came out, I was so proud of them — it was awesome. But did he affect my playing style? No.

In fact, at one point I remember some of the guys in the band asked me, "Why don't you start doing some of those tapping things?" I said, "Fuck no, man. I'm going to do my own thing, and Eddie can do his thing. I'm not going to copy him." I enjoyed what he did and I appreciated it, but I couldn't see trying to incorporate it. I was much more of a straight-ahead kind of guy.

Y&T went through three different major labels. Did record companies know what to do with the band?

No, not really. The first two record companies that we signed with — actually, the first three, which is London Records, A&M Records and Geffen Records — they all had the best of intentions. But we would get on the roster and most of the A&R staff were like, "We don't know what to do with these guys." It was kind of one of those things. A lot of bands have those issues, but our situation never got better.

"Summertime Girls" was a homerun for the band. With a title like that, it's hard to miss.

I suppose so. It's one of those songs people either love or hate. That was just a moment in time. I went to the rehearsal studio, started messing around with some chords, and the song sort of wrote itself in an hour. It's a cool tune, but it's the kind of thing you wrestle with —

AWESOME. BUT DID EDDIE VAN HALEN AFFECT MY PLAYING STYLE? NO."

"Is this too commercial for us?" We weren't actually trying to come up with a single, but it became one. To some degree, it was great — we got major airplay, our video was in heavy rotation, and we were on a big tour with Mötley Crüe. The song wasn't really representative of our style, though.

Predictably, the label wanted a sound-alike follow-up single.
Of course. They wanted a song that had the same vibe. They even got some writers to submit a song called "All-American Boy." I was like, "Oh, boy, here we go..." It was difficult doing our next album. The label was saying, "You should do this, you should do that..." There was a lot of fighting going on among the band and with the label. That was sort of the catalyst for us getting another deal.

Back in the day, your guitar and gear were pretty consistent — a '68 Les Paul and a '74 Marshall.
That's right, an MK II Marshall. The combination just worked. It did exactly what I wanted far as the tone and sustain. Years later, I switched to amplifiers that had much more gain, such as Mesa Boogie Rectifiers or what I use now, the Diezel VH4, and I noticed that I ended up playing with a lighter touch. I then went back to my Marshall, and I quickly found that I pulled more tone and character from my hands, because it wasn't so overamped. I was like, "Wow, I really play differently with a Marshall."

What's the story with you turning down Peter Frampton's invitation to form a supergroup?
We did two albums for Geffen and got dropped. At that point, the band was so disgusted and disappointed by the industry, so we decided to go our separate ways. Our A&R person at Geffen, John Kalodner, was a big fan of mine and wanted me to have success. One of his fortes was putting together supergroups, and he told me Peter Frampton was looking for another lead singer and guitar player, somebody who was a little different from him and someone he could write with.

PAUL NATKIN/GETTY IMAGES

Peter called and we talked for a few minutes. I told him, "Peter, I just got off from 17 years with one band and beating my head against the wall with the industry. I don't know what to do right now, and it doesn't feel right to just move right into something else. I need some time to give me head space." He totally understood, though he wished I would've at least come down and rehearsed with him.

I'm surprised you didn't try jamming with him, just to be sure.
I probably should have, but I didn't. I was dead broke at the time. Six months later, his manager called me and said, "Look, we've been through 60 different guys, and you're the guy. They're going to give us a deal if you join. Just do it." And I still said no. He got really pissed at me — the manager. I saw Peter eight or nine years ago. He came down to play a show. I just wanted to say hi in person and tell him, "I'm sorry about way back when — and now I kind of wish I would've done it." He was gracious, of course. He's a sweetheart.

Instead of forming a band with Frampton, you eventually reunited Y&T.
Yeah, it was the band that had broken up. We did a couple of independent records. It was a tough time because our style of music wasn't popular; the grunge thing was happening. We signed with a Japanese company to do two records, and we toured Japan. We didn't play a whole lot more than that. We did some local shows here and there. After that, I did two solo records. It was kind of back-and-forth. I did shows with my own band, then some Y&T shows.

Then in 2003, the Sweden Rock festival had us come and play, and that kind of kicked us back into gear. We found we had a huge following in Europe, which was kind of strange. From that point on, we played as much as we could and toured quite a bit more for a while.

The band hasn't recorded an album in 13 years. Will there ever be another one?
It's been a plan for the last eight years. I've been lagging on that for a couple of different reasons, mostly just getting the impetus to crank up the songwriting again. I'm not one of these guys who's constantly writing. I have to make time for it. Once I get in the groove, things start happening, but I just haven't done it.

I don't know how to describe it or what my reasons are. I will say I have every intention of making it happen. GW

Y&T's Joey Alves [*left*] and Meniketti in Chicago in 1983. "We used to have a saying: 'We know how we're going to make it big. We have to open for ourselves!'"

"MÖTLEY CRÜE PLAYED THEIR FIRST GIG EVER WHEN THEY OPENED FOR US AT THE STARWOOD"

SE

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Steve Lukather with his signature Ernie Ball Music Man Luke III. "We actually have the Luke IV coming out, which will have my own Music Man pickups that they wound just for me," he says

WHAT EVERYONE CAN LEARN FROM LUKATHER

Melodic maestro **STEVE LUKATHER** on the advantages of *not* being a shredder — and the wisdom behind releasing full-length works in the age of itty-bitty attention spans

AS A MEMBER of Toto, Steve Lukather's melodic solos and slick songwriting defined a generation of AOR-loving fans throughout the Eighties. If you can recall the sweet sounds of pop-leaning rock classics like "Hold the Line," "I'll Supply the Love," "Africa" and "I Won't Hold You Back," then surely you've dug into Lukather's inspired licks. Of course, a player as inspired as Lukather can't be held down, as evidenced by his expansive career as a sideman with the likes of George Benson, Michael Bolton, Michael Jackson, Cher, Peter Criss, Ringo Starr, Elton John and about a million others (including one especially cool appearance with George Harrison in 1992).

So, yeah... it goes without saying that Lukather has impacted the masses unimaginably. Through big hits, endless songsmithery and immense restraint in an era perpetually defined by shred, the San Fernando Valley native has managed to unintentionally soundtrack the music zeitgeist.

"It's funny... I can't even remember half of the things I've recorded," Lukather says. "I've been on so many ses-

STORY Andrew Daly **PHOTOGRAPHY** Alex Solca

sions that I'm lucky if I can remember any of them. People ask me, 'Steve, what's your favorite solo of yours?' or 'Do you think any of them are underrated?' I always have to tell them, 'I can't remember.' I mean, I've got ones that I love, but I can never pick. It's not for me to decide what's best or most underrated, you know? I've always been one to try and write a good song and record a solo that people will remember. That's always been way more important to me than shredding or competing."

These days, due to a myriad of nasty legal dealings, Toto is no more. But that doesn't mean Lukather is leaving behind the songs he helped create; quite the contrary. In addition to some of his most memorable solo cuts, Lukather happily plays many of Toto's classics while on tour. And so, it shouldn't come as a surprise that with his latest album, *Bridges*, Lukather is dialing back to the stylings that made him famous with his flagship band.

"This album came together over the pandemic because of me sitting around saying, 'Man... I'm so bored; I feel like I'm going to kill myself,'" he says. "But there was more to it. The pandemic was a weird time. The other side of *Bridges* becoming a reality was me being scared, thinking, 'Are we ever gonna be able to come back? Are we ever gonna leave our homes again?' It was weird because it came out of nowhere, and it all hit me at once. Plus I had just broken up with my girlfriend, so I really wanted to do something significant. That led me to call my friends and make a record that is unabashedly Eighties."

During a break from the road, Lukather dialed in with *GW* to dig into the making of *Bridges*, his aversion to shredding and the challenges of making new music for a world that might not be listening.

Were you intentionally trying to make a stylistically different record from your last album, 2021's *I Found the Sun Again*?

I definitely did want to do something different because I think *I Found the Sun Again* was a bit more self-indulgent, so I was more focused on having fun again with *Bridges*. So I called up a bunch of my old Toto bandmates to be on the record because I really did want to harken back to that style of music. Due to complicated legal issues, Toto will never make another record. But I still love that music, so I called up Simon Phillips, David Paich and even my son Trev [*Lukather*]. I love how it came out, but I think the sound results from just doing it for fun. We said, "Fuck it, let's go in and make a cool, Eighties-

"Now you put out an album, and it has a one-week shelf life. It used to be six months, but it feels more like six minutes now," Lukather says

sounding record," and we did so shamelessly without denying ourselves what we wanted to do. I guess I needed to scratch that itch. It just came down to downshifting my approach.

In what ways did you downshift?
I just wasn't trying to keep up with the insane abilities of the younger players. I'm a big fan and love it all, but my strength was always more melodic playing. So I said, "Let me stay in that arena. I'll leave the crazy stuff to the younger players." As far as putting the parts together, all the solos were done in one or two takes, and I didn't piece anything together. I really tried to make a statement where you could hum along and remember this stuff rather than just going, "Oh, wow...."

Would you call this album a sort of "bridge" — sorry, had to! — between Toto and your solo work?
I think so. And that's why I brought a guy like David Paich out of semi-retirement to write with me. We still love working together; we just didn't want to call it Toto. And it's not that I'm remotely ashamed of that music; I'm on the road performing that stuff now. But it's complicated in terms of ownership and all the craziness of it all.

How does your approach to guitar shift from project to project?
First and foremost, I've gotta try to keep up. [*Laughs*] But don't get me wrong; I'm not some old stiff thinking it's over. But man, everybody seems to play so much fast bullshit, and I disagree with that entire concept. But there are so many incredible young players out there now, male and female. I've gotta say the women have stepped up. Some of the best guitar players in the world today are women. And I think that's great because when I started, there weren't many. So while I hate even to differentiate between men and women because they're all great players, the reality is that things have come a long way. So for me, it's about trying to keep up with all these insane players while still being myself.

What do you feel has empowered more women to pick up the guitar?
People's mindset has changed. It all starts there. Because it doesn't matter what sex you are; a great player is a great player. Go ahead and blindfold-test anybody without telling them what sex the player is and see what happens. If the player is great, they're gonna say, "Oh, shit, that was awesome. Who is that?" They're not going to know if it's a man or woman, and they're not gonna be able to say, "Oh well, that was pretty good for a chick" or whatever bullshit thing. I wouldn't ever say that, and I know it's not politically correct to say that, but some people still think that way. But not me; I'm an old, peace-loving hippie from the Sixties. [*Laughs*]

You're clearly tuned into what's happening in music now, but do you ever feel beholden to what you've done in the past? If so, how do you balance the two?
I think I was more beholden to my past as a player on this new record because I didn't try to be too flashy. Like I said, I've always been known as a melodic player, and I'm cool with that. Back when I started, there was no such thing as "shredding." In the Seventies, we were just trying to make good records. But then Eddie Van Halen came along and changed the whole game. I remember him telling me once, "Man, I didn't mean to start all this madness," but he really did change the entire game. That always cracked me up, as Eddie was the father of shred. But I never tried to do that, and I still don't. I'm still the same melodic guy I've always been.

Which solo from *Bridges* proved to be the most challenging?
That's hard to say. I think that each piece tells its own story, you know? So the most important thing for me was to craft memorable things. Again, I aimed to lean more melodic and avoid being too flashy. But there are still a couple of flashy licks in there, which I guess means I can still play. [*Laughs*] But I think keeping it to one or two takes and not doing much editing meant I came away with some pretty clean, straightforward and memorable moments.

Which guitars, amps and pedals did you bring to the party?
You're gonna laugh; I used one guitar for the entire record. [*Laughs*] And that was my Music Man Luke III. It's the green one you've probably seen in my recent photos. As far as amps are concerned, I've been with Bogner for some time and love them. They're great amps. I've used a lot of different amps over the years, but I don't really use anything else these days. And my pedals are the same ones I have on stage with me on tour. I used a little delay, reverb and a Jeff Kollman Bombastortion pedal. I didn't do anything fancy, really. Like the songwriting and approach, I kept the gear minimalistic.

What do you like most about Music Man guitars?
This is my 30th year using Music Man guitars, and I love them. And we actually have the Luke IV coming out, which will have my own Music Man pickups that they wound just for me. I didn't know if I wanted to do that, but they talked me into it. And I'm glad they did because they're mind-blowingly good. But they're great, versatile guitars. They are incredible tools that give me everything I need in the studio and on the road. I love vintage guitars, too. I've got a bunch that will go to Trev when I'm gone, but there's something about my Music Man guitars that have kept me with them for a long time. They're beautiful guitars, play great, sound fantastic and do exactly what I need them to do.

What are some challenges in making new music in a low-attention-span world?
It really is a drag, man. I guess it would be easy to question why I'm still doing it, but I don't. But it is challenging. Because when I was a kid, I remember crying and begging my parents for new records. It used to be an event when new albums would come out, and we'd all go out and get and scramble to get the latest [*Jimi*] Hendrix, Stevie Wonder or [*Led*] Zeppelin album. And then we'd go to a friend's house and sit around and take it in. And once we did that, we'd hang out and talk about what we just heard. But it's not like that anymore. Now you put out an album, and it has a one-week shelf life. It used to be six months, but it feels more like six minutes now. I mean... you're lucky if you can get anyone's attention with even one track, let alone an entire album. So I know it's about singles and playlists now, but I still feel that as an artist, it's essential to make a complete musical statement. GW

"Everybody seems to play so much fast bullshit, and I disagree with that entire concept"

A TREVOR'S DOZEN

TREVOR RABIN, the six-string wizard (and songwriter) behind "Owner of a Lonely Heart," shares the stories behind six classic YES tracks and six tracks from his masterful new album, *Rio*

STORY BY ANDREW DALY

PHOTO BY HRISTO SHINDOV

ESOTERIC AS HE is, it shouldn't come as a surprise that Trevor Rabin has crafted a record that's "stylistically tough to categorize." But if one were to try, you could call Rabin's latest, *Rio*, a guitar-driven, proggy, yet oh-so very poppy, country-and-western opus. Oh, and it's loaded with political and social undertones regarding his native stomping ground of Johannesburg, South Africa, too. How's that for an earful?

Of course, if you're Rabin, this eclecticism is par for the course. After all, this is the man who wrote beloved radio staple "Owner of a Lonely Heart" yet still seems comfortable refuting all labels slung his way, instead "visiting other genres, and injecting influences along the way." And that's saying something considering Rabin's work with Yes is *nearly* universally loved, with "nearly" being the operative word, as there's always someone who must remind the group that Rabin's debut with Yes, *90125*, is "overplayed."

Again, that might be true, but it doesn't take away from the fact that *90125*, which wasn't even supposed to be a Yes record, captured the zeitgeist in the fall of 1983 through its merging of prog, pop and proto-MTV bluster.

Looking back on his mindset as he entered the fold, Rabin tells *Guitar World*, "I've always tried to approach the guitar with an open mind. And back then, I looked at it from the point of view of being an arranger for an orchestra rather than just aimlessly soloing over things. The guitar is such an interesting instrument; it can be a sound palette, do swirly things, create harmonies and be presented in endless ways. I have never taken a single-minded approach and always wanted to be rather acrobatic about it, which is an approach that created wonderful results on *90125*."

To Rabin's point, his inventive mindset, which dates to his days as a teenage phenom in Rabbitt, was the perfect juxtaposition alongside Jon Anderson's vocals and Chris Squire's basslines.

"The funny thing about that record is what preceded it, which was Geffen unceremoniously dropping me via a phone call and hanging up," Rabin says.

"I remember playing with the five-way switch on the Strat and settling on the one that gave me the total bridge tone," says Trevor Rabin of "It Can Happen," a classic 1983 Yes track. Rabin's new album, *Rio*, is out now

"I had 'Owner of a Lonely Heart,' but Geffen felt it was too left field for the marketplace, and that I should make music that 'sounded more like Foreigner.' I'm glad I ended up joining Jon, Chris, Tony [*Kaye*] and Alan [*White*], and the plan was that we form Cinema."

History shows that it was suggested, okay, insisted, at the behest of Atlantic/Atco Records, that Cinema change their name to Yes. And while this "wasn't ideal," it probably made a lot of sense to the former members of Yes.

History also shows they had it right; even Rabin agrees: "I didn't like the idea of Yes holding a shadow over us, as this was supposed to be a new band. But that's how it went, and the writing dated back to what I put together for Geffen, so it didn't feel like I was fitting into a pre-existing mold. Looking back, it worked out incredibly well."

It's not difficult to see why *90125* is well-loved, and Rabin's spirited performance is a massive part of that. All these years later, that same spirit is present throughout *Rio's* 10 tracks. With that in mind, Rabin dialed in with *GW* to run through the backstory of *Rio's* finest cuts and a few well-loved classics from "back in the day."

"Big Mistakes" from *Rio* (2023)

I found some cool sounds with the Fractal going into speakers different from a Marshall. The sound was more like a stereo hi-fi type of thing, and once I found the initial riff sound, I knew I had something. But the song is based around two chords, with other bits and pieces sprinkled around that. There's a lot of power and clean-sounding tones, which I did with my Strat. Regarding inspiration, it's about my teenage to 20-something years. I was in a band called Rabbitt, and we were some pretty naughty guys. [*Laughs*] As I was writing "Big Mistakes," I told a friend, "I should have called this "I Can't Believe I'm Still Alive,'" because that era was pretty wild.

"Oklahoma" from *Rio*

"Oklahoma" is about the Oklahoma City bombing [*April 19, 1995*], which happened when I was a new guest in America. Even though I'd come from South Africa, a place with terrible systems and problems of its own, the bombing deeply affected me. I said, "Oh, my God, I can't believe this is happening here." Those words reverberated inside my head; I added some of my soul influences, and the song and its general sensibility began to come together. But the thing was, I didn't even want to do the song initially because it was too raw. I wasn't sure if the idea would negatively affect people who were a part of that tragedy, so I held it for years. But I realized that if I didn't put it on this album, where would I put it? So, I grabbed my acoustic guitar, which is my trusty Martin, went at it softly, added an angry Strat solo in the middle and let the orchestra build and swarm to the end.

"Thandi" from *Rio*

Thandi was a hero rhinoceros years back, like an actual rhinoceros. But the whole song is an anti-poaching commentary. The poaching trade in South Africa is awful; they're killing off all the rhinos and selling the ivory to China. This incredible animal is being depleted, and it's so devastating. That's close to my heart, so I wanted to write a song about it for *Rio*. Once I had a theme, I came up with the fast, single-note riff that goes throughout and loved the idea of having the drums bashing away.

I used my signature Alvarez acoustic [*AER100WH*], came up with that riff and used my Les Paul on the solo. But I worked on it for quite a while. I said to myself, "This has got to be perfect," once I had it, I sprang into action, saying, "Right, I've got it. I'll record it tomorrow." But once I was recording, "I was like, 'Oh, shit, what I've written here is not that easy.' I had to practice it for a while to learn the bloody thing. [*Laughs*]

"Tumbleweed" from *Rio*

The story behind "Tumbleweed" is quite simple: I knew I wanted to do an acapella thing and had these beautiful jazz chords, and I thought they'd sound good over that. But what's interesting is the songs on *Rio* are somewhat simplistic chordwise, but "Tumbleweed," with its jazz viewpoint, is more involved. I wanted to do something that used a ton of jazz chords and extensions. So it's a simple love song, but what went into it makes it a mystery-sounding thing. I used a lot of clean-sounding guitars and my Barney Kessel Gibson Les Paul for the solo. The song ends with me using my Gibson Super 400, playing those same jazz chords while doing the melody from the beginning.

"These Tears" from *Rio*

I'm so glad you've asked about this one because no one else has. "These Tears" is about falling in love with someone you shouldn't. I'm sure we've all been through that; it's almost like facing an addiction, but you're addicted to a human being. You continue because it's hard to stop, which is heartbreaking. So, that's the crux of "These Tears," lyrics-wise.

I decided to do the old 10cc trick of looping chords, but instead of using a keyboard, I sang one chord and then looped another over it with my guitar. So getting the proper vocal treatment and performance was important, and I was diligent about that. And then, with the guitar solo, that came out weird, but I like it because it's not what you'd expect, which sums up the whole thing.

Trevor Rabin [left] and Chris Squire on stage with Yes in the U.K. in July 1984

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

"Toxic" from *Rio*

"Toxic" has the same message as "These Tears" in that it's about toxic relationships. I had written a shuffle-type thing, and I was playing with all sorts of guitar sounds and putting them over the top of it. In doing that, I came up with something I began to enjoy, and before I knew it, the song was coming together.

But the solo was interesting because I was enjoying myself so much when I started, and it went on for about 15 minutes. It was this big, extended solo, so I knew I needed to break it up. So, that's why I have two solos there. And then in the chorus, there's an almost ZZ Top shuffle thing where there's the main guitar in the chorus, which differs from the verses to where I got these weird sounds that seem very experimental, looking back on it.

"Owner of a Lonely Heart" from *90125* (1983)

I recently saw an interview with [*producer*] Trevor [*Horn*] where he said I used a 12-string Rickenbacker, but that's not true. I didn't use a 12-string Rickenbacker on any record with Yes, so Trevor was mistaken. But I wrote "Owner of a Lonely Heart" in London while in a downtrodden mood. I first played the riff in the bathroom and thought, either this is a great riff, or it's nothing but the room's sound. The next day, I played it again, it

"*Union* was a PECULIAR record; things didn't feel very unified. There were a lot of session musicians on it, which NO ONE was pleased about"

sounded good, and I thought, "I should pursue this." And once I brought it to the sessions for *90125*, I remember using a Boss Distortion [*DS-1*] and had it cranking through a Marshall. I put a little delay on and recorded that very heavy intro using my Strat. And then, when the band kicked in, I changed from the Strat to my Les Paul, which gave a heavy, clean sound.

"Leave It" from *90125*

Strangely, the biggest thing I remember about "Leave It" is that it was a victim of not getting a great drum sound. I don't know what happened, but we couldn't dial it in while we were in the studio. I say that, though, because we ended up doing it acapella, and if we hadn't done that, the song would not have turned out as it did. Once we did, it became enjoyable because I'd never done anything like that before.

As for gear, I used that same Boss Distortion I mentioned earlier, giving the song the heavy sound in the middle. I did that with my Strat through the Boss pedal into an old Marshall from maybe 1972. The gear wasn't far off from what I used on "Owner of a Lonely Heart," aside from this beautiful 12-string electric I borrowed from Chris for the staccato parts.

"It Can Happen" from *90125*

With "It Can Happen," I again used my Strat. But I used another pedal — one of those old Boss Chorus pedals [*CE-2*], which is such a beautiful-sounding pedal. I had the Strat, the Boss Chorus and a Boss Compressor/Sustainer [*CS-2*], all fed into that same Marshall. That's the whole sound of the song, with maybe a bit of delay. I remember playing with the five-way switch on the Strat and settling on the one that gave me the total bridge tone. Chris had written this melody that I felt needed something like that, and I thought, "There's got to be some kind of riff that I can write to fit this," and I came up with that, which went on forever.

"Cinema" from *90125*

The Grammy we won for "Cinema" was the most unbelievable thing. I couldn't believe it. We were up against some stiff competition, and when we won, I was like, "Are you kidding me?" But I'll take it. The intro to that was part of a much bigger piece when we were rehearsing, but we decided not to do it, and it became the shorter version from *90125*. We just retained the intro of that larger piece, and it shouldn't come as a surprise by now that I used the same Strat. [*Laughs*] But I used the middle setting on the five-way switch. I know I had the DS-1 again and fed that into the Marshall. Beyond that, it was simple and not too far from the rest of *90125*.

"Saving My Heart" from *Union* (1991)

Union was a peculiar record as we recorded [*it*], and things didn't feel very unified. There were a lot of session musicians on it, which no one was pleased about, which led to Rick [*Wakeman*] telling me he sees Union as the "onion record," as it makes him cry to think about it. The business people got involved, and it turned into a "reunion album," and to this day, I've never listened to it all the way through.

No one had much to do with each other's songs, and "Saving My Heart," "Miracle of Life" and "Lift Me Up" were the only things I played on. But with "Saving My Heart" specifically, it was Jon who said, "Oh, I love that; let's record it." So we did. But when we mastered it, there was no solo, so I decided to put a quick one on. I remember finding it enjoyable once we mastered it again.

"Endless Dream Suite" from *Talk* (1994)

I am proud of that set [*which includes "Endless Dream: Silent Spring," "Endless Dream: Talk" and "Endless Dream: Endless Dream"*]. I was using quite a lot of different stuff, but I recall having an old Korg from 1983. I designed many sounds on that Korg, which was limited from a digital memory aspect, but I got the sounds I needed and added guitars later.

We did the *Talk* album digitally, and it was quite an experience. But that whole "Endless Dream" thing was something I did entirely on my own. I stuck my head in the sand and didn't pull it out until it was finished. And when it was done, I didn't know if anyone would like it because I was too close to it. But when John heard it, he had tears in his eyes, so I thought, "I guess they like it." I look back on that, and yes, it's one of my greatest highlights. GW

MAD SCIENTS

BARONESS guitarists **JOHN BAIZLEY** and **GINA GLEASON** concoct a new way forward on the band's latest album, *STONE*

STORY BY **JIM BEAUGEZ** PHOTO BY **EMILIO HERCE**

ALCHEMY. THAT'S

how John Baizley describes it. The most inventive guitar duos always combine their strengths into a singular chemistry that creates something unpredictable and new. Think Angus and Malcolm Young. Kirk Hammett and James Hetfield. Slash and Izzy Stradlin.

On *Stone*, Baroness' sixth and latest album of searing progressive metal, the pairing of guitarists John Baizley and Gina Gleason has arguably achieved similar heights, in its own way.

"This is one of the most fun and challenging records for me to ever put together, because that was the goal the whole time," Baizley tells *GW*. "It was almost improvisational sometimes, to where Gina and I don't really have to show each other what we're doing; we just have to listen and feel it. Maybe we started as two guitar players acting in parallel, but we're really trying to be one section of this band."

Baizley and Gleason are sitting in Baizley's Philadelphia home, where they spent countless hours woodshedding and refining the guitars on *Stone* before turning an Airbnb near the Canadian border into a makeshift studio, where they self-produced for the first time. *Stone* also marks another first — a new beginning, really — as they've shed the thematic album titles that began with *Red* in 2017 and ended with *Gold & Grey*, Gleason's first with the band, in 2019. Throughout the process of creating *Stone*, those efforts paid dividends over and over.

"Our chemistry presents itself in many different, cool ways on this record," Gleason says. "There's the really direct ways; like, on 'Beneath the Rose,' there's guitar harmonies and complementing riffs throughout the whole song. But then there's 'Choir,' which is a more abstract, loose composition where we're doing really sparse guitar parts, [*where*] I'll be playing a triplet phrase, but John will play the last note of it, and I'll cut it off."

Acoustic guitars — Baizley with his Rockbridge and Gleason on a Martin SC — turn up on nearly every song on *Stone*, beginning with the dreamy fingerstyle guitar on "Ember." While that merely serves as an intro to *Stone*, quickly giving way to one of the album's most brutal riffs on "Last Word," acoustic guitars play a more prominent role on "Magnolia" and elsewhere provide texture behind their vintage amp tones.

"Once we've learned some standard practice, like fingerstyle guitar, it's not hard for us to then apply that to electric guitar and find some new way of doing that," says Baizley, who fell in love with the technique after discovering John Fahey while on tour in England in 2006. (Gleason subsequently picked it up from Baroness albums.)

"That's how life bleeds into art, bleeds back into life, bleeds back into art," he says. "You constantly have to be cross-pollinating."

Guitar World spoke with Baizley and Gleason about how their guitar partnership has solidified and led to the riffs, harmonies and interplay on *Stone*.

Coming off your previous color-themed albums, was *Stone* mapped in advance?

BAIZLEY: No, this one had no roadmap whatsoever. With all of our records, in my mind, there's only ever one rule, and that's to identify the primary characteristic of the former record, and just not do that. So, if *Gold & Grey* was this overload of embellishments and complete psychotic onslaught of layering, like sonic destruction, then *Stone* only had to just not be that.

Gina joined just before *Gold & Grey*. Now that you've been through a whole album-tour cycle, how do you relate as guitar players?

GLEASON: Being the new person in a group of musicians presents a lot of challenges. I had my own perspective of what I thought Baroness songs should sound like. But the band was like, Whatever you think a Baroness song should sound like, we already did that, so that's not what we're gonna do this time around. I had to re-approach how I go about playing guitar and thinking about my instrument and then come back full circle to my natural sensibilities. I think going through that process of pushing myself helped us gel as guitar players. I have a really good sense of John's guitar impulses, and I feel like I [*know*] how to best complement that.

BAIZLEY: Since the beginning of this band, I've never recorded with the same lineup twice until this record. Having a new member join from record to record creates the situation where you have to work within the reality of those confines. Now that we've gotten all that out of the way, we were able to be just John, Gina, Nick and Sebastian as Baroness, and we got into being creative where Gina and I, maybe we started as two guitar players acting in parallel, but we're really trying to be one section of this band. It's been really nice for us to get to this point and put a record together that is able to lean into that solidarity and chemistry.

The guitar parts on this record are well orchestrated, like the harmonies on "Anodyne" and all the acoustic textures, which were surprising to hear.

FROM LEFT: FRANCESCO PRANDONI/GETTY IMAGES MEGAN KOR

BAIZLEY: I think there's an acoustic on almost every song, except "Choir" and "Last Word." The pure joy of this record was that we didn't have too much figured out before these songs became songs. We had a loose idea of some arrangements and some compositions before we really got down to business. But it felt to me that we were able to act on impulse whenever the mood struck. If the impulse was to pull out an acoustic guitar and use it in a more traditional way, like in some of our folky numbers, or as a texture or rhythmic element the way we use it in some of the louder songs, we were always ready to respond to those impulses. There's this innate trust that runs throughout the process of songwriting whereby if it sounds cool and crazy, we'll just try it.

Did jamming so much on acoustic guitars lead into that being showcased on the record?

GLEASON: We play a lot of acoustic together, and I play a lot of acoustic guitar at home. I go through phases of months where all I play is nylon-string acoustic. And we write a lot on acoustic guitar. We write a lot of vocal stuff with acoustic guitars in our hands. This is a kind of band where it's not like you go to band practice and you go home and that's the end of band practice. It's this all-consuming thing where there's no separation.

BAIZLEY: If it's something we do offstage, off camera, off record, if it's something we do musically that we enjoy doing, that means it's appropriate and obligatory to bring into the recordings. I know there are bands who've got a sound that's defined and particular enough that there would potentially be a discussion like, "Okay, we love playing acoustic music, but we're Slayer" [*Laughs*], and this isn't an acoustic band. However, for us, it quite simply is whatever's nearby that you can make music with, now's the time.

How did fingerstyle and hybrid picking seep into the new record?

GLEASON: The "Last Word" solo is hybrid picked until the last little chunk of it. A lot of times I'm tucking

of songs, like take a motif from a song and expand on it in a way that has a lot of space, and maybe it's the melody to a part of a song, but it's spread out over longer intervals. So it naturally bled into the process of doing this record, and also our live show a lot.

What guitars do you feel helped you dial in your tones?

BAIZLEY: It's, like, 90 percent Stratocaster. The Strat, for me, is the tool that has the most variety and is easiest to play. There's a little bit of Rickenbacker. There's quite a bit of this '62 ES-330 I've got, which I think at this point is my favorite guitar to play, but it's so old and it's so nice, it can't leave the studio at all. I brought out my original Les Paul, which is I think an '86; it's one of those ones with three gold pickups. It's ridiculous. It's like Peter Frampton. [*Laughs*]

What's your pickup configuration on the Strat you're using now?

BAIZLEY: It's the standard triple-single, and I really love the two and four positions. I find myself spending a lot of time in those odd, between-pickup situations. It restricts the frequency output — at least it feels to me it does. We've certainly got a particular sound, but I think because of that and because of the nature of the way that Gina and I play and arrange our two guitars, I don't treat them as equals. There's like a tenor and an alto, like they're supposed to occupy upper and lower sections rather than be twins.

Gina, you've talked in the past about how you prefer Teles for their ability to cut through really well.

GLEASON: I have a 1992 G&L LSAT Classic that's set up for our lower-tuned stuff. In 2017 at the Wiltern in Los Angeles, John was like, "Do you want to try this American Pro Tele?" And I accidentally never gave it back. [*Laughs*] Usually [*a Tele is*] complemented with a Les Paul, but I think because of the pickup selections John favors, this has the same effect, like those more rounded-over Strat tones.

You had a variety of vintage amplifiers in the mix. That's uncommon for a quote-unquote metal band.

BAIZLEY: We fell in love with this old Gibson Falcon. It's one of those really old ones that look more like furniture or something.

GLEASON: I used to work at Guitar Center, and my friend, an old co-worker, was moving out of the country and was like, "Can you hold this amp for me?" And that Falcon became a staple.

BAIZLEY: For the end of "Magnolia," we miked the back of a Fender Champ. We wanted to get the most vulnerable, emotionally intense sound, and it wasn't gonna come from the smoothness or headroom of a nicer amp. It's just this tiny amp being pushed to its absolute limit, and then capturing the sound from the back. It really sounds like something is about to become destroyed.

With this record, we hit on the idea that sometimes the instrument or the amp takes you where it needs you to go. I realize some of this older equipment doesn't have the comprehensive range that more modern equipment has, but it's actually much easier to use to tell a story or create a narrative, or in practical terms, stick out of a mix. Part of it, at least for me, was feeling comfortable with the idea that not every power chord I hit needs to be the heaviest, fullest, broadest thing of all time — that sometimes, something with a finer edge on it is actually more unique and captures your attention and your imagination, and thereby becomes a better creative tool because of its limitations. GW

> "It's just this tiny amp being pushed to its absolute limit, and then capturing the sound from the back. It really sounds like something is about to become destroyed"

It builds like a Randy Rhoads solo. Maybe it's the legato playing — but it has a feel similar to "Crazy Train." Was he much of an influence?

BAIZLEY: Yeah, it's got the spirit of that, for sure. Obviously Randy Rhoads is monumentally amazing, but he's one of those rare guitar players who's technically fast but musical. He's a storyteller, a complete player. And I think that's what Gina did with that solo. There's almost like a lyricism to it, a conversation.

GLEASON: This was something we discovered, I think, on *Gold & Grey*, where we do these extended parts my pick in my index finger and using my thumb, because I want a more rounded sound, and that interacts in a cooler way with the effects I'm using. The "Last Word" guitar solo is a good example of that — it's just like fuzz compressed as much as possible. Doing some of those runs with just a thumb and middle and ring finger interacted in a cool way with the effect.

Two recent views of a Fender-fueled John Baizley and Gina Gleason at work. "There's like a tenor and an alto, like they're supposed to occupy upper and lower sections rather than be twins," Baizley says

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Jimi Hendrix relaxes,
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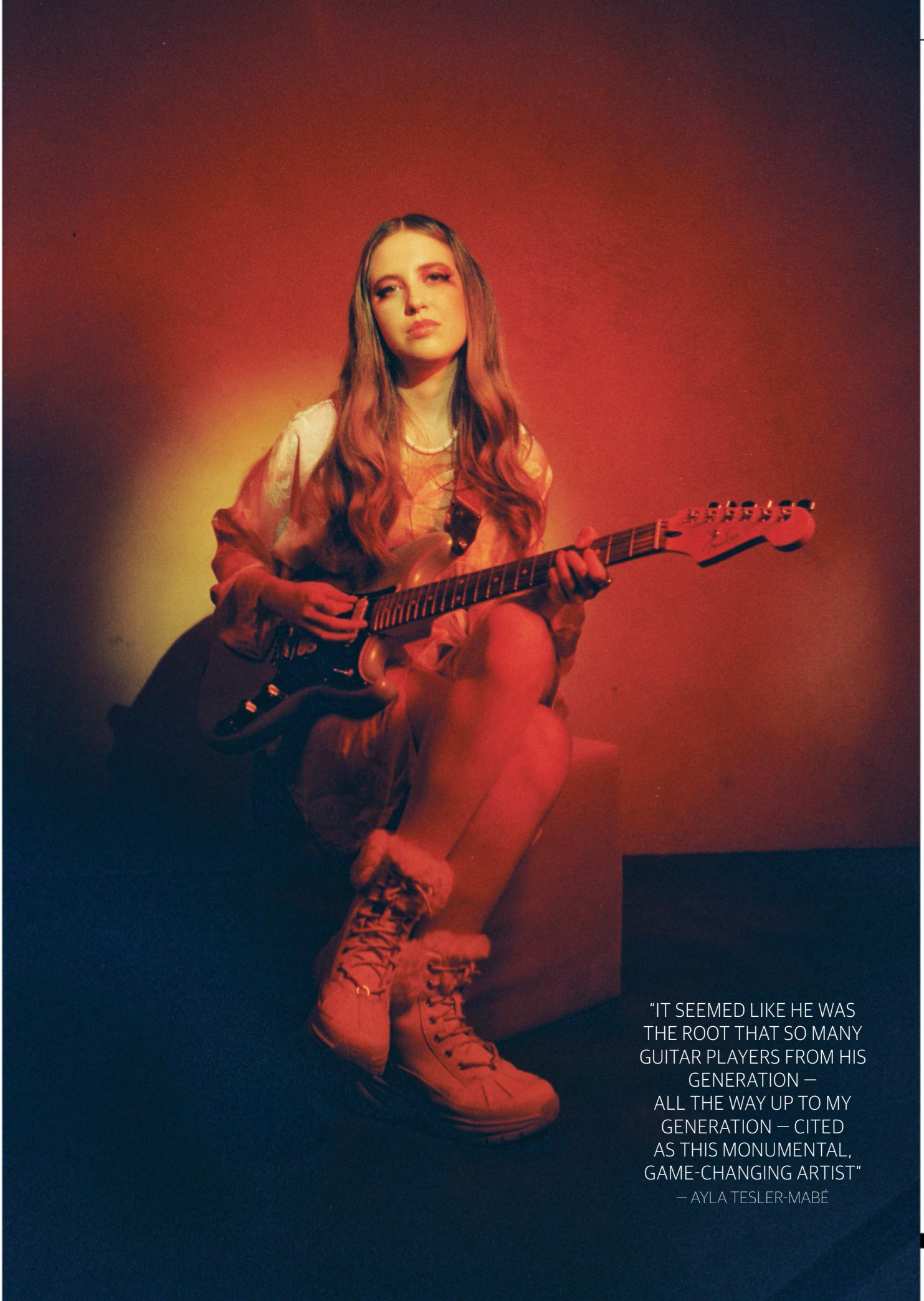
LIGHT YEARS AHEAD

WHY JIMI HENDRIX IS STILL INSPIRING THE LATEST GENERATION OF GUITARISTS — 53 YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

STORY BY JIM BEAUGEZ PHOTO BY CYRUS ANDREWS

CYRUS ANDREWS/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES



"IT SEEMED LIKE HE WAS THE ROOT THAT SO MANY GUITAR PLAYERS FROM HIS GENERATION — ALL THE WAY UP TO MY GENERATION — CITED AS THIS MONUMENTAL, GAME-CHANGING ARTIST"

— AYLA TESLER-MABÉ

THE STAGE WAS DARK

when Melanie Faye began her solo performance at the closing session of Summit LA18, an invitation-only gathering of ideas and innovators held in downtown Los Angeles in November 2018. The lights slowly rose as she picked jazzy notes from a surf-green D'Angelico semi-hollow guitar, and by the time she segued into a rendition of "Little Wing," they had revealed a stage nearly empty except for Faye.

A fresh face in the guitar pantheon, Faye had only become "internet famous" the previous year when a simple smartphone video shot as she sat on a floor playing a Stratocaster went viral. But her dexterous fretboard skills, and the influence of Jimi Hendrix upon them, were undeniable. She didn't shy away from acknowledging her hero, either — a poster of him hung on the wall behind her, as if to announce her arrival to his lineage.

Five years later, the now 25-year-old Nashville guitarist's intoxicating, inventive mashup of the Jimi Hendrix classic with an instrumental variation on pop singer Mariah Carey's Number 1 hit "My All" has garnered millions of views on YouTube and inspired a transcription video that has clocked tens of thousands of its own.

That Faye's reading of "Little Wing" was based on a version played by Eric Gales — who was hailed as the second coming of Hendrix when he first entered the national scene in the Nineties — reveals the connection generations of artists, and guitarists in particular, have to the music Hendrix created. There can never be another Hendrix, but the cosmic dust he left behind still informs and inspires the galaxy of music being created today.

"If you're gonna do Hendrix at this point, like 50-something years later, you'd better put some type of unique interpretation on it, an unexpected twist, because we've heard it a million times," Faye says. "It's not enough to just hold a candle to his cover. You also have to put your own spin on it."

JAMES **Marshall Hendrix was born** in Seattle, Washington, on November 27, 1942, and died at age 27 in a London flat, half a world away, on September 18, 1970. Of the intervening years, his most prolific were his most visible, riding a wave of fame as the prince of psychedelic rock in the late 1960s. He broke all the rules of pop music culture with outlandish, ear-splitting performances full of guitar acrobatics, wailing feedback and his casual charm, arriving at a time when American and British musicians weaned on blues and early rock 'n' roll were beginning to experiment with the boundaries of pop music.

The year the Jimi Hendrix Experience released their debut album, *Are You Experienced* — 1967 — also saw the debuts of influential bands like the Doors, Grateful Dead, Pink Floyd, the Velvet Underground and Big Brother and the Holding Company; not to mention pivotal works by established artists, including the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, Jefferson Airplane's *Surrealistic Pillow* and the Who's *The Who Sell Out*. That June, before American audiences had even heard his record, Hendrix performed an incendiary set at the Monterey Pop Festival in central California, opening with a furious rendition of Howlin' Wolf's "Killing Floor" and ending with his slinky take on "Wild Thing," climaxed by setting his Stratocaster on fire and smashing it to pieces.

"I slowly made my way into [*Jimi Hendrix's*] musical universe and began discovering for myself his impact and what he meant," Ayla Tesler-Mabé says

And then there were Hendrix's own songs, led by his visionary guitar playing and lyricism and rooted in rhythm and blues. "The Wind Cries Mary," which showcased his signature double-stops and preference for fretting chord tones on the low E string with his thumb instead of barring across all six strings; the 12-bar blues of "Red House"; the pentatonic box workout of "Manic Depression"; and "Purple Haze," a monstrous, career-making groove built around an E7♯9 chord, which he used often enough for it to become known as the "Hendrix chord."

While he had to go to England to find fame on his own, his guitar style was cemented playing clubs primarily across the American South, where he helped evolve R&B and soul into funk. During his years on the chitlin' circuit — a loose network of clubs and juke joints that catered to Black artists and audiences — through the early and mid Sixties with Little Richard, the Isley Brothers and others, he honed an unshakable sense of rhythm and mastered the pentatonic and blues scales that were the foundation of his playing.

"In my eyes, his rhythm work doesn't really get talked about a lot," says Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, who spent his teenage years playing blues festivals and the remaining juke joints around the American South. "It was a big thing for me,

RAUNIE MAE

EXTRA JIMI'S

Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, Mateus Asato, Towa Bird and others choose their favorite Hendrix moments

Compiled by Jim Beaugez

ALLY VENABLE

My favorite Hendrix moment or song would have to be "Castles Made of Sand." Jimi's writing is remarkable, and I just love the way he bases this song with the chords he plays. I was fortunate enough to get to play this song in Austin at the Jimi Hendrix Experience 80th birthday show last year. It was a surreal moment for me. It is also one of his most difficult songs to play and sing at the same time, so it was really fun because it challenged me.

and a lot of people don't know that he played on the chitlin' circuit and he came from the R&B world. He was definitely steeped in rhythm guitar playing."

On the 1965 Isley Brothers song "Move Over and Let Me Dance," for example, the guitar work is fully formed Hendrix — the lines between rhythm and lead guitar are blurred as he frets rubbery pentatonic lines between chords, which is to say most of the time. He even throws in a variation on a 7♯9 chord.

Rhythm and blues is also where neo-soul artist Faye relates most to Hendrix. While she certainly has the chops to pull off Hendrix's more fiery work, she deliberately tones down her shredder side when working with other artists, opting to lean into the cleaner tones and textures in Hendrix's playing and his R&B roots.

"R&B is relevant to my generation," she says, "and if I emphasize that influence, I'll be able to work with more modern artists." Her strategy is definitely working, as she performs and collaborates with pop artists like Mac DeMarco, and with rapper Russ on "Fatima" from his 2023 album, *Santiago*. "It's a very distinct guitar riff, but I also did the bass, and then I wrote the melody for the hook and co-produced the drums. That song is channeling an R&B, hip-hop-adjacent sort of vibe."

A deeper listen reveals another layer to the song, though, as Faye explains. "I'm hitting the Hendrix chord over and over again, but it's removed from context. I'm doing it like a jazz embellishment in a contemporary R&B, hip-hop-adjacent modern context, not in a psychedelic rock context, not just because I want it to be relevant to my generation, but also because I wanted to alter the perception of the guitar. I didn't want people to look at the guitar and think, 'more *cliché* rock and blues licks we've already heard.' I wanted to put a fresh, modern R&B spin on it."

For Seattle rock guitarist Ayron Jones, Hendrix's chord inversions have inspired songs like "Take Your Time" from his 2021 album, *Child of the State*, and "Blood in the Water" from his 2023 release, *Chronicles of the Kid*. "On 'Take Your Time,' I'm using an inverted E6, which is basically taking the bass out of the E6 chord and inverting it to a third and holding down the rest of the chord, so the bass is actually the harmony," he says. "And then I'm just kind of walking in it, almost like a C♯ minor — but it's over a major."

> "IF YOU'RE GONNA DO HENDRIX AT THIS POINT, YOU'D BETTER PUT SOME TYPE OF UNIQUE INTERPRETATION ON IT, AN UNEXPECTED TWIST, BECAUSE WE'VE HEARD IT A MILLION TIMES"
>
> — MELANIE FAYE

Brazilian virtuoso Mateus Asato, a shredder who started out worshiping players like Steve Vai, Steve Morse and Joe Satriani, found his way to Hendrix working backward through John Mayer and Stevie Ray Vaughan. "It was just me playing distorted and trying to be as fast as possible," he says. "I just wanted to play the scales and try to be clean with my arpeggios, all that stuff. But then I realized maybe that wasn't my path."

Taking inspiration from Hendrix's funkier, more soulful side for his work with Silk Sonic, the supergroup created by Bruno Mars and Anderson .Paak, Asato's playing is heavily indebted to the Seventies funk, soul and R&B that Hendrix inspired.

"When it comes to just the rhythm guitar playing, Bruno was very specific, like, 'Man, you've got to add those little nuances in between chords so it just makes everything prettier,'" Asato says. "Just the brightness of those little nuances, the technique of Jimi — I don't even know how to describe what that is. You play a chord, and I mean, we know it's the pull-off, the hammer-on, the double-stop, whatever. But again, there's no term — it's just Jimi."

WHILE **creating a new chord vocabulary** with his 7♯9 and proclivity for the C major shape are key to Hendrix's continued influence on new generations of guitarists, his other technical and

[*from left*] **Hendrix at the Albert Hall in February 1969, Nashville's Melanie Faye and Philadelphia's Greg Sover**

AYLA TESLER-MABÉ

One thing that makes his playing so fiery, expressive, amazing and soulful is the way he bends with vibrato. I feel like there are a lot of players who will bend, and then they release the bend and then they apply vibrato — but he bends with vibrato, and it just has more of a "human voice" quality to it. I think of his solo on "Fire" at Woodstock; that's one of my favorite solos of his, ever. In certain moments it doesn't sound like a guitar at all.

CHRISTONE "KINGFISH" INGRAM

I love "Voodoo Child." Not the "Slight Return" version, but the slower, "Catfish Blues"-sounding one. I just love the story — you know, "the moon turned fire red" — I love that mystique. That's actually one of my favorite joints by him. I also love "May This Be Love" because it showcases his R&B chops.

GREG SOVER

On the first VHS I ever had of Jimi Hendrix, there was "Purple Haze," "Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)," "Little Wing" and "The Wind Cries Mary." I forget the gig, or it might've been a bunch of gigs in one, but they were played at the house all the time. I was very young, and this was me just pretending I knew how to play them on the guitar when I didn't even know chords yet. I was about 14 when I learned "Purple Haze," and it's been "Purple Haze" ever since. Every time I hear that song, it reminds me of that.

MARCUS MACHADO

"Machine Gun" from *Band of Gypsys*. That solo is like no other. It's probably in the top three best solos ever by Jimi, because what he was doing on the guitar in that particular moment was crazy. I tell people, if you've never heard of Jimi, definitely go to that moment and listen to what he's playing — it sounds like a machine gun, literally. I want to take a nap after listening to that because it's just so emotional. As far as songs go, one of my favorites is "Hey Baby (New Rising Sun)." It's mixing classical music, R&B and soul. And, of course, "1983 ... (A Merman I Should Turn to Be)." That's another incredible sci-fi song.

DAVID REDFERNS/REDFERNS (HENDRIX) COURTESY OF D'ANGELICO (FAYE) STACIE HUCKEBA (SOVER)

MATEUS ASATO

Hendrix playing the National Anthem, breaking the rules — I think that was savage. To me, that's what makes a revolution. I'm not trying to be political or whatever; it's just like, music has no boundaries. Now [*that*] I'm opening my mind about it, [*also*] him freaking burning the guitars and just going crazy and kicking the cabinets and stuff. But yeah, nowadays everybody plays the National Anthem on the guitar, but those are things that I add to the list of why he was really a guitar revolutionary.

MELANIE FAYE

I love all of his pretty songs, like "Little Wing," "Angel," "Bold As Love" and "May This Be Love." I have very fond and nostalgic memories of listening to "Drifting" on my very first smartphone in the ninth grade.

NICK LEE

The first riff that really grabbed me was the main riff in "I Don't Live Today." It was just so much heavier than anything I'd heard from that era thus far as a youngling. The groove of the drums versus the guitar is just heavy as hell, then you add the grimness of the lyrics. It's all heavy, [*and it*] hit me very hard as a kid. If you want to talk about a particular "moment," then I have to go with [*him*] ripping a solo with his teeth, just because it doesn't get much more badass than that. I haven't seen anyone do it since.

TOWA BIRD

I love "Fire." That's one of my favorite songs ever. "Little Wing" and "Voodoo Child" obviously have a place in my heart. And on the first record by the Experience, "Red House" is just so good as well. I don't know if I do have any favorites, but I guess if I had to summarize, it's probably "Fire" and then the others — with very minor degrees of separation. When you're an angsty teenager in your adolescence, nothing makes you happy. Nothing is ever good enough. But his music was really uplifting for me and made me feel so excited about the world.

Moon Tooth's Nick Lee [*left*] and Christone "Kingfish" Ingram

stylistic innovations are also alive and well.

Twenty-two-year-old YouTuber Ayla Tesler-Mabé has amassed nearly 200,000 subscribers on the platform by posting videos of her playing songs like "Hey Joe," "Voodoo Child" and "May This Be Love." She has parlayed that success into deals with Fender and Ernie Ball Music Man and a collaboration with Willow Smith, and is now releasing her own soulful, guitar-driven pop singles on Spotify.

"When I started falling in love with guitar-driven music, I found that all roads led back to him," Tesler-Mabé says. "It seemed like he was the root that so many guitar players from his generation — all the way up to my generation — cited as this monumental, game-changing artist. That piqued my interest, and from there, I slowly made my way into his musical universe and began discovering for myself his impact and what he meant."

On her 2023 single "Haven't Seen Much of U Lately," Tesler-Mabé layers wah-drenched pentatonic runs over its melodic, funk-lite chorus, switching from major to minor and back as the root note changes, reminiscent of the licks Hendrix plays over the second half of "One Rainy Wish" from *Axis: Bold As Love*.

"You can really get so much mileage out of pentatonic," she says. "When you analyze Hendrix's rhythm playing, pretty much all of it is just [*the*] major pentatonic scale over major chords and then doing that for minor chords with the minor pentatonic scale. When I realized that, the fluidity opened in my playing."

Double-stops — or, more generally, a dyad, playing two notes at the same time — are often the grease that enables such fluidity between Hendrix's chords and notes, and he

"HIS RHYTHM WORK DOESN'T REALLY GET TALKED ABOUT A LOT... HE PLAYED ON THE CHITLIN' CIRCUIT AND CAME FROM THE R&B WORLD. HE WAS DEFINITELY STEEPED IN RHYTHM GUITAR PLAYING"
— CHRISTONE "KINGFISH" INGRAM

used them in many different ways. He opened "Hey Joe" with a dyadic slide, for example, and the hammer-on variation he used throughout his work, but notably on songs like "The Wind Cries Mary" and "Little Wing," might be his most signature move of all.

"'Little Wing' is the perfect example of a song that was written a while ago but still makes sense today, and you're still finding out things about it, whether it's what he was singing about or the guitar playing," says Philadelphia-based blues guitarist Greg Sover. "The little embellishments and flourishes count so much, and if you ask me, they influenced a lot of music today, a lot of R&B, neo soul. There's still a lot of rock music that uses those double stops. And that was probably the biggest inspiration and lesson I've taken from the whole situation, from Jimi Hendrix, period."

Earlier this year, Sover took the stage at the Newtown Theater in Newtown, Pennsylvania, to play a two-hour tribute set of Hendrix tunes where he reached deep into his catalog, playing songs like "May This Be Love," "Up from the Skies" and the slow-burning, 15-minute "Voodoo Chile" alongside the better-known "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" and his other famous songs.

For his 2023 album, *His-Story*, Sover collaborated with Band of Gypsys bassist Billy Cox on covers of "Manic Depression" and "Remember," a chirpy deep cut from *Are You Experienced* that also showcases his double-stop technique.

"Jimi just took the guitar somewhere else. It made you really think, and it just actually makes you keep on thinking," Sover says. "He inspires you to keep looking a little further, because Jimi Hendrix is already done, so you don't want to do what he's done already. You want to leave that to the genius that he is already, but on your instrument itself, it makes you want to search more."

Asato, who studied Hendrix at Musicians Institute in Los Angeles — in a class actually devoted to Hendrix's guitar playing — credits Jimi's double-stops with inspiring him to look beyond the conventional separation of chords and licks and continuing exploring the instrument.

"[*In the class,*] we would grab a chord progression and then add those nuances in between the chords," Asato says. "That class specifically was game changing [*in terms of*] opening my horizons. The double-stops pretty much changed me; it was a mind-blowing thing. I was like, 'Okay, I need to drink that as much as I can.'

"He was just moving by the flow of his cre-

BOWLING FOR HOLLERS

The time a pre-fame Hendrix landed at the Hollywood Bowl

EVER WONDER WHAT it might have been like to see the Jimi Hendrix Experience in action before they achieved international fame? Until now, if you weren't there, you'd probably be left wondering forever. Thankfully, Experience Hendrix L.L.C. partnered with Sony Entertainment's Legacy Recordings to give fans a taste of what they've been missing via *Jimi Hendrix Experience: Hollywood Bowl, August 18, 1967*. Sure, we all know that Jimi Hendrix, Noel Redding and Mitch Mitchell were a sight to behold live, but the Hollywood Bowl show was notable because it found the trio in front of 17,000-plus Americans who — for the most part, anyway — had no idea who these three loud, interesting-looking dudes were. And considering that most of said attendees were there to dig on the dreamy sounds of the Mamas & the Papas, one can assume — especially since their reaction to Hendrix's guitar machismo was mostly soft clapping — that their minds were blown. And yours will be, too, as you bask in the glory of "Fire" and "Purple Haze," along with a searing version of "Killing Floor."

Recorded just days before the release of *Are You Experienced,* and having previously walked off a tour with the Monkees due to audiences being "unappreciative," urgency was clearly afoot. But that's not all; on the visual side of things, you can check in with several eyewitnesses of the show via *Monterey Pop to the Hollywood Bowl*, a mini-documentary detailing Hendrix's journey to crack the States after conquering the U.K. Prepared by Janie Hendrix, John McDermott, Hendrix producer Eddie Kramer and mastering engineer Bernie Grundman, *Hollywood Bowl, August 18, 1967*, is a time capsule showcasing Hendrix overcoming a bewildered audience and unleashing a 10-song set that oozes-with-molten-lava. Ironically, this show would be one of the Mamas & the Papas' last, while Hendrix's star would ascend to heights unimaginable. How's that for a changing of the guard?

— Andrew Daly

Towa Bird [*left*] and Ally Venable

"THE MELODIES, RIFFS AND LICKS HE CHOSE FELT SO HUMAN, AND HE MADE THE GUITAR CRY. IT HAD THE SAME SPIRIT AND THE SAME SOUL THAT A HUMAN VOICE HAS"
— TOWA BIRD

ativity and the freedom of what was in his mind, and that was the most revolutionary part of him. It's so experimental. He plays blues, but it's not blues. It's just so freeform, and that's what I love."

Texas blues guitarist Ally Venable, who has five solo albums to her credit — including her 2023 set, *Real Gone*, which includes collaborations with Buddy Guy and Joe Bonamassa — finds inspiration in Hendrix's songwriting legacy. Tackling "Castles Made of Sand" for the Experience Hendrix 80th anniversary concert, which took place last year in Austin, renewed her fascination with his approach.

"It opened up a new perspective [*for me*] on how he approached his songwriting," Venable says. "There's, like, three different stories in one song, and each verse is its own story. He puts a picture in your head, and it's this whole creative experience. And the way Hendrix sings is not the normal way people phrase things; his phrasing is so different."

For Venable, Hendrix's overall creativity as a musician makes him "probably the most influential guitar player of all," for all the stylistic quirks no other players were using at the time. "One of the main things Hendrix is known for in his guitar playing are his chord structures and the way he structures his songs, these really intricate chord progressions nobody else was doing, and still a lot of people don't do now because it's so difficult," she says. "Also, the things he would try in the studio. He would overlay guitar parts on top of guitar parts — and the backwards playing... Nobody really did that either."

But the techniques Hendrix championed that made the biggest impression on successive generations of players might be those from his August 1969 performance of "The Star Spangled Banner" at the Woodstock Music and Art Fair in Bethel, New York.

Simultaneously patriotic and subversive, Hendrix reimagined the National Anthem as a fuzz-drenched, gnashing display of trills, bends and tremolo divebombs that sustained into washes of feedback and soared into the early morning sky. There had been guitar heroes before, sure — who could forget the "Clapton is God" graffiti in 1966? — but those three minutes and 43 seconds of revolutionary sound cast Hendrix among the immortals.

"He was able to make his guitar sound like so much more than just a guitar," Tesler-Mabé says. "He found ways to emulate human voices and screaming and bombs and warfare."

AS **cosmic as Hendrix could be** on extended journeys like "1983 (A Merman I Should Turn to Be)," and as tender as he was on "May This Be Love" and "Little Wing," Hendrix also helped create heavy rock music before "heavy" was anything more than bad Sixties slang for "serious." He wasn't alone in this respect; on their landmark 1964 hit "You Really Got Me," the Kinks upped the ante for rock 'n' roll with perhaps the first hard-rock riff. And in 1968, "Helter Skelter" by the Beatles and "Born to Be Wild" by Steppenwolf joined the party.

But on the first song of the U.S. version of *Are You Experienced*, Hendrix preceded both with "Purple Haze," a proto-heavy metal song in every respect. While drum-

"THERE'S THREE DIFFERENT STORIES IN ONE SONG, AND EACH VERSE IS ITS OWN STORY"
— ALLY VENABLE

mer Mitch Mitchell and bassist Noel Redding pound away in lockstep rhythm, Hendrix slices through with the song's signature descending riff, then shout-sings atop the main E7♯9 - G - A verse progression. Structurally, there is no chorus but a solo followed by a return to the opening motif, then a siren-esque, ringing double-stop with a whole-step bend until the song fades out.

"There's something so brave about those two [*opening octave*] notes," Sover says about the song that changed his life and put him on a path to pursue music. "What captured me the most would probably be the tone. It was strong, and it came in with bravado. It was like, 'What is this?'"

"There's this amazing swagger, and you start to notice there are a lot of phrases where he's off the beat, but he always comes back in a way that's so interesting and expressive," Tesler-Mabé says. "Like on 'Purple Haze,' there's this one line in the intro that has this incredible behind-the-beat swagger to it. I never heard a player with so much feel and freedom in his rhythm playing."

While Van Halen successfully updated "You Really Got Me" on the band's eponymous 1978 debut album, no such move has been made on "Purple Haze." Frank Zappa and the Cure have both reimagined the song in their own ways, and admirably enough, but neither improved on the original. The same might be said for "Manic Depression," although plenty have tried (including Jeff Beck & Seal in 1993). Aggressive bands like Carnivore and Nomeansno covered it, and it's also featured on Sover's latest album [His-Story]. Sandwiched between "Temptation," with its "Red House" shuffle, and the heartland rock of "One Way Train," Sover's faithful take puts the chop he learned from Hendrix on full display.

Progressive metallers Moon Tooth, propelled by the shredding of Nick Lee, recorded a particularly ballsy version in 2017 that solidified their reputation while retaining much of what Hendrix laid down.

"I wanted it to still pay tribute to him and the band, but I wanted it to sound like Moon Tooth," Lee says. "One thing I wasn't gonna try to do is the solo exactly note for note, because my guess is he probably just plugged in and fucking ripped his solo. It wasn't like he sat with manuscript paper and wrote it all out. So I just plugged in and improvised a bunch of solos and picked my favorite one. It feels true to the solo. It pays tribute to the feel of it more than the actual music theory part.

"It's almost upsetting when someone that's into heavy music hasn't gotten to the point where they appreciate Hendrix and those records, just because of how heavy it is and how it runs a gamut of different types of music, but still sounds like him. It's all coming from his hands."

Ayron Jones, whose 2020 single "Take Me Away" drew a sonic connection between Hendrix and Tom Morello, grew up in the same central Seattle neighborhood as his hero and met people who were part of his early life, including one of his babysitters, grounding the legend in real and familiar places and faces. Growing up in the Nineties, Jones attributed the source of his hometown's grunge scene with its original rock star — an association few made at the time, but which makes perfect sense in retrospect.

"The Seattle sound really started with Jimi Hendrix," Jones says. "Look at a lot of the stuff he did, and look at the guitar players from the grunge era. He was the prototype when it comes to all the music that we love, all these things we think of as innovative sounds."

The most obvious example might be Mike McCready, whose Hendrix-via-SRV playing on popular Pearl Jam B-side "Yellow Ledbetter" and devotion to wah-wah licks played on a Stratocaster gave him away. And recall Kim Thayil's use of feedback noise in Soundgarden — and even

MIKAYLA LOBASSO (BIRD) TINO SIELAND (VENABLE)

"Band of Gypsys was the first funk rock band," Marcus Machado says. "After Jimi passed, that's when Funkadelic and Eddie Hazel and all that stuff came about"

OGATA PHOTO

Jerry Cantrell, who has cited Hendrix as a primary influence.

And let's not forget the hard funk-rock hybrid Hendrix pioneered on *Axis: Bold As Love* cut "Little Miss Lover" or the all-timer "Fire", from his debut. He returned to that feel on the songs immortalized on the live record *Band of Gypsys* in 1970 — "Power to Love" has the kind of riff Morello would later write in Rage Against the Machine, and "Machine Gun" features Jimi's use of percussive, pitchless "chuck-a" fret-hand-muted strums that Morello would employ on songs like "Bombtrack."

Progressive neo-soul and funk artist Marcus Machado, who discovered Hendrix early enough to play "The Wind Cries Mary" for his kindergarten graduation, worked his way backward through the Experience catalog from *Electric Ladyland* before landing hard on *Band of Gypsys*, which he credits as the first true funk rock album.

"*Electric Ladyland* was one thing, but *Band of Gypsys* was a whole other spectrum," he says. "A lot of people don't know, but that's where George Clinton and Parliament-Funkadelic got their stuff. Band of Gypsys was the first funk rock band; after Jimi passed, that's when Funkadelic and Eddie Hazel and all that came about."

It was the funky "Fire" that stood out most to TikTok star-turned-recording artist Towa Bird, who cranked *Are You Experienced* on her headphones while riding the school bus in middle school.

"The way he sang through the guitar and made the guitar into another human voice was the thing that stood out, like he was the lead singer — but the guitar was also the lead singer," she says. "I thought that was so rare and unique. The melodies, riffs and licks he chose felt so human, and he made the guitar cry. It has the same spirit and the same soul that a human voice has.

"I think the way he uses really simple forms and phrases over and over again, it's like ear candy and earwormy," she adds. "He uses simple pentatonic boxes and works around that and says so much with so little. Especially his call-and-response technique where he'll sing and then respond with the guitar."

TO **listen to Hendrix is to submit to his trip**, and each generation of guitar players continues to embark on a lifelong journey led by the otherworldly adventurer of *Electric Ladyland*, the visceral dreamer of *Axis: Bold As Love*, and the hitmaking revolutionary of *Are You Experienced*. While it's impossible to understate Hendrix's influence on guitar and pop culture, his legacy has always rested in the hands of his fans.

"I know a lot of the young rockers and young blues guitar players from my generation," Ingram says, "and we all have a little bit of Hendrix in us, like Taz [*Brandon Niederauer*] and Quinn Sullivan. I don't care how anyone tries to put it, Hendrix is somewhere in everybody's playing."

Because of that undeniable lineage, the innovations and emotional range Hendrix brought to the instrument and music itself continue to find audiences.

"I'm always finding different ways to be an emotional guitar player, and I think that that is really how Jimi carries on," Jones says. "Finding ways to move crowds and try to connect in this emotional way, because for Jimi the guitar became a spiritual device as much as it is an instrument. I'm always trying to connect with people by using my instrument to connect to the spirit."

"The true genius is when you're older, still listening to it and finding new things or figuring out what he was really saying," Sover concludes. "What inspires me more than anything is this futuristic thing in his music that keeps the music alive today, where nothing is outdated in what he's singing about." GW

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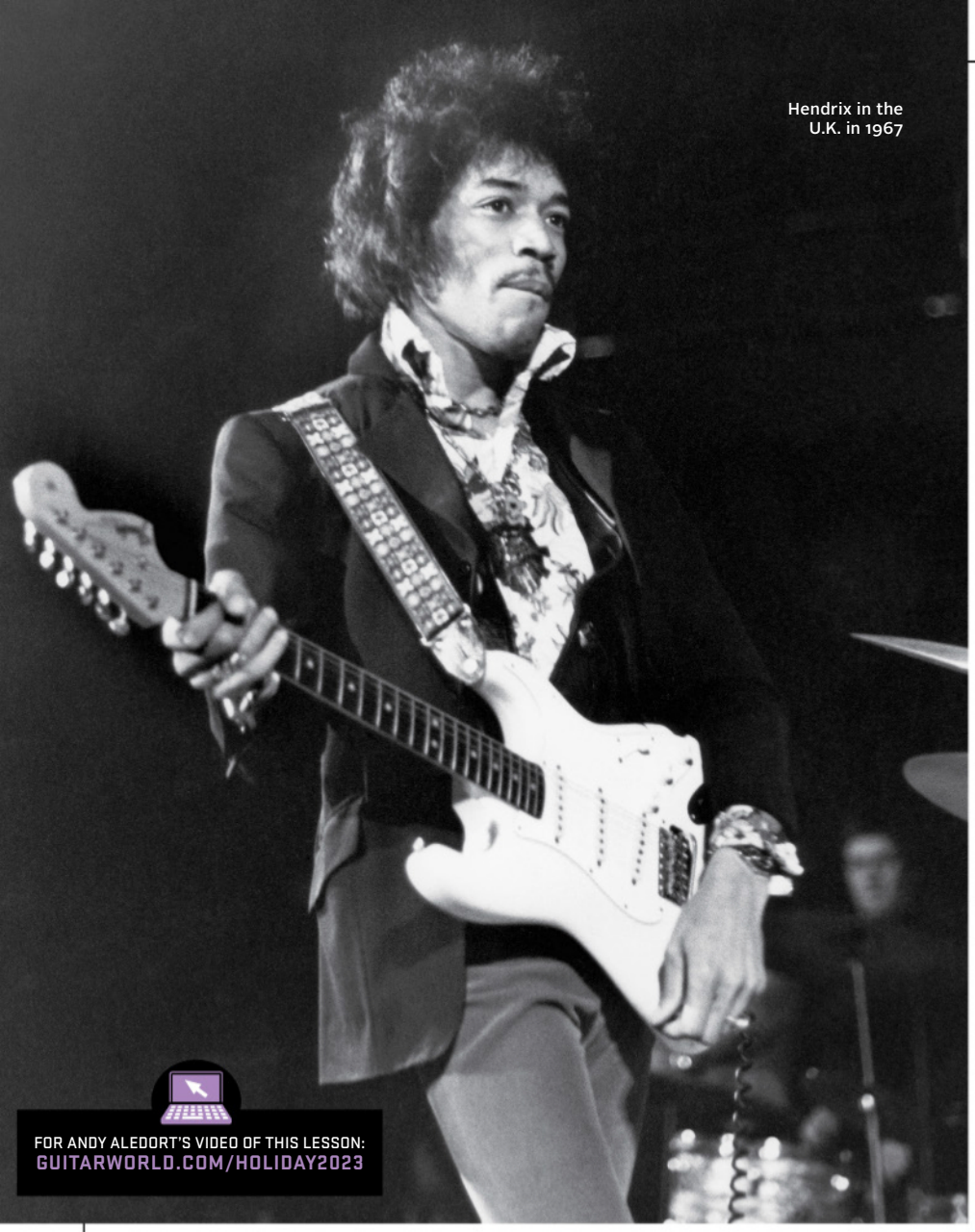


Hendrix in the U.K. in 1967

FOR ANDY ALEDORT'S VIDEO OF THIS LESSON:
GUITARWORLD.COM/HOLIDAY2023

UNDER HIS WINGS

GW'S RESIDENT JIMI HENDRIX AUTHORITY, **ANDY ALEDORT**, DEMONSTRATES HOW THE LEGENDARY, GROUNDBREAKING GUITARIST STILL INFLUENCES THE MODERN ROCK, BLUES AND R&B STYLES OF SIX OF TODAY'S MOST ADMIRED PLAYERS

BY ANDY ALEDORT

JIMI HENDRIX IS rock's most important and influential guitarist, rightfully revered as one of the most significant musicians of all time. More than a half-century ago, the Jimi Hendrix Experience's 1967 debut release, *Are You Experienced*, included this bold proclamation: "Be forewarned. Used to be an Experience meant making you a bit older. This one makes you wider. Jimi Hendrix breaks the world into interesting fragments, and then reassembles it. You hear with new ears after being Experienced." Sixties record-company hype? Absolutely, but also 100 percent true.

All these decades later, Hendrix's playing on *Are You Experienced* and his subsequent recorded performances remains among the freshest and most exciting music ever heard, and his influence as a guitarist, composer and sonic innovator continues to resonate with today's youngest generation of guitarists. In this lesson, we'll explore how Hendrix's music has inspired the distinct, signature styles of six of today's top players — Melanie Faye, Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, Marcus Machado, Ayla Tesler-Mabé, Joanne Shaw Taylor and Ayron Jones.

MELANIE FAYE

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-old Melanie Faye is a phenomenal guitar player from Alabama, now based in Nashville, who brings a jazz/R&B sensibility to Hendrix's music, as evidenced in her creative and expressive arrangement of his classic ballad "Little Wing." **FIGURE 1** illustrates some of the techniques and chord voicings Faye employs in her cover of the song. The example begins with a beautiful Eadd2 chord voicing played in 1st position, which is reverse raked by dragging the pick upward across all of the strings, sounding each string individually while allowing all of them to ring together. This is followed by lush voicings of F♯m7add4, G♯m♭6 (or Eadd2/G♯) and Amaj9 that include the open top two strings. You'll hear Hendrix utilize these kinds of chord voicings on songs such as "May This Be Love," "One Rainy Wish," "Angel" and others.

In bar 4, an Am9 voicing is embellished with a quick slide up and down the high E string between the 7th and 8th frets, followed by a pull-off to A at the 5th fret. Faye loves to use quick slides and pull-offs like these, and you'll hear her utilize this technique a lot in her playing. The bar ends with a descending lick that resolves to E major in the subsequent bar, setting up the shift to her take on "Little Wing."

In bars 6 and 7, played over Em and G, quick hammer/pulls are used as chordal embellishments in the same kind of way that Hendrix decorated his phrases in "Little Wing," as well as in songs like "Castles Made of Sand," "Bold As Love" and "Have You Ever Been (to Electric Ladyland)." At the end of bar 7, a G♯ diminished 7 chord is arpeggiated (each note is picked individually) setting up the subsequent Am7add4 in bar 8. The jazz sensibility is revealed via the E♭maj♯5 and E♭m7♭5 chords at the end of this bar, and this colorful move brings us back to the tonic, Em7add4, which is articulated with a quick double hammer-on and more chordal arpeggiation.

Bars 10 and 11 include wide-stretch chord voicings for Bm9 and Am9, and bar 11 culminates with a very Hendrix-like descending phrase that sets up the Gadd9 chord in bar 12. The following Fadd9, Csus2 and Dadd4 chords are all arpeggiated, and in bar 15, a single-note phrase outlines an E♭ diminished 7 arpeggio (E♭, F♯, A, C) and alludes to a B7♭9

FIG. 1 MELANIE FAYE

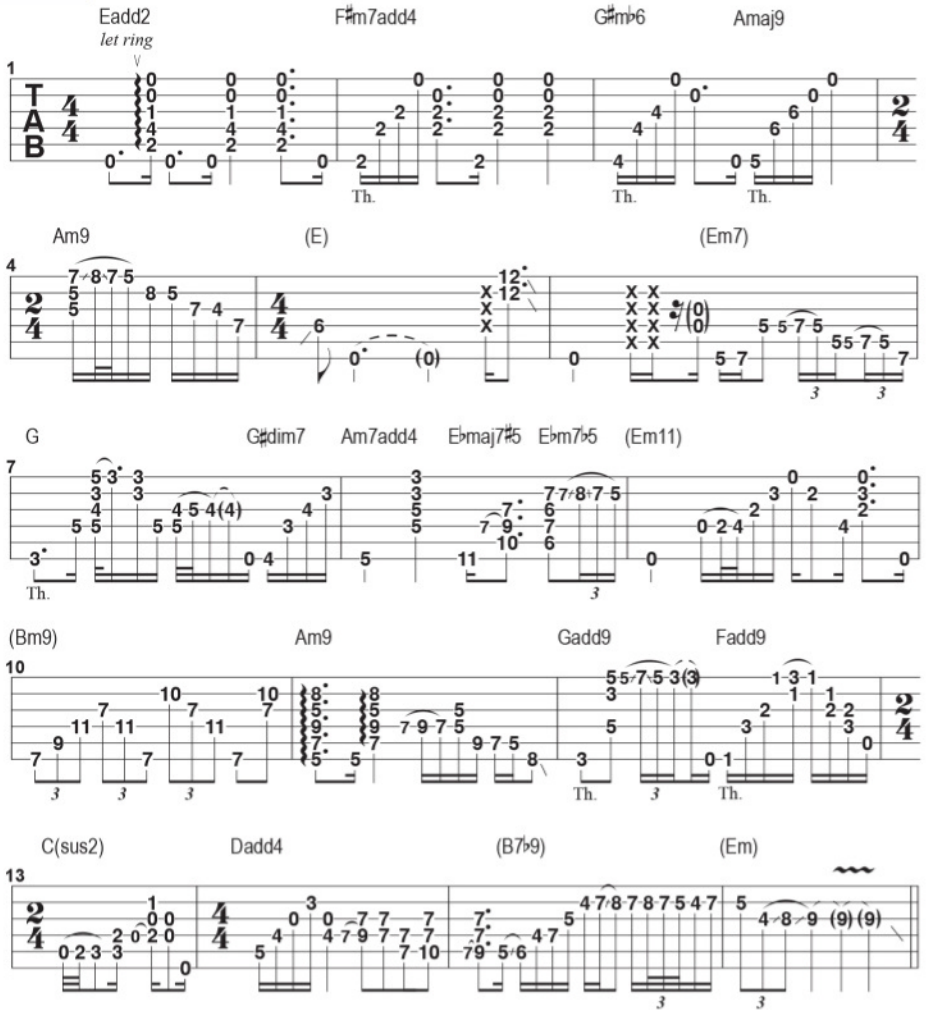
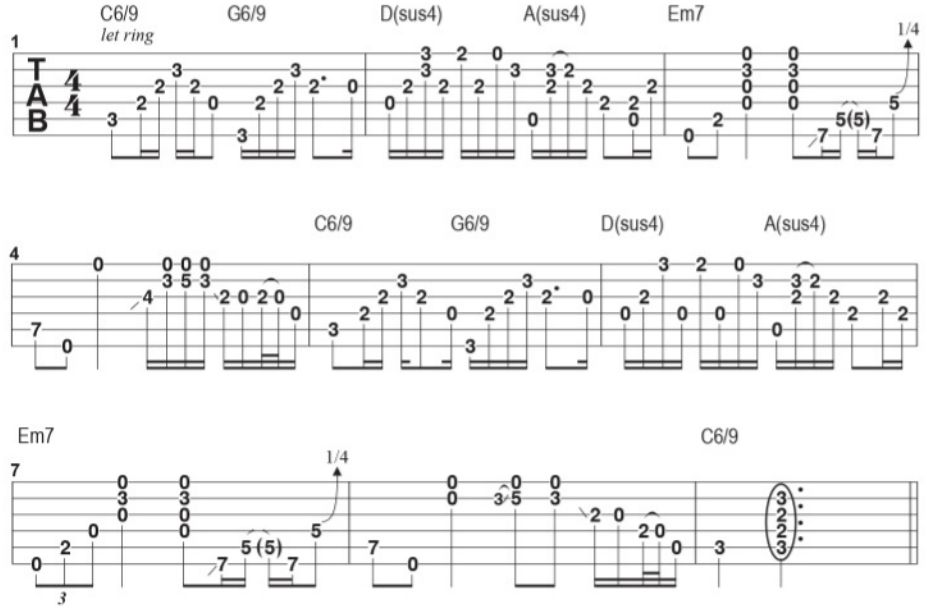


FIG. 2 CHRISTONE "KINGFISH" INGRAM



chord, which then resolves satisfyingly to Em.

CHRISTONE "KINGFISH" INGRAM

ONE OF THE MOST exciting young blues guitarists on the scene today is Clarksdale, Mississippi's Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, who, at just 24 years old, has turned heads and earned accolades far and wide. Writer Tom Moon describes Ingram's playing as "Astounding... it's almost as if he is singing through the guitar." Ingram often covers "Hey Joe" and, not unlike Faye, he likes to substitute more complex chord voicings during the progression before unleashing very Hendrix-inspired, fiery blues-rock solos.

FIGURE 2 presents a rhythm part akin to Ingram's approach to "Hey Joe." As opposed to sticking with the original song's standard major-chord progression of C - G - D - A - E, the harmony is broadened here, starting with arpeggiations of C6/9 and G6/9. Both of these chords include the notes E and A, fretted on the D and G strings at the 2nd fret, respectively. This is followed by Dsus4 resolving to D and Asus4 resolving to A. The progression wraps up with a 1st-position Em7 voicing that includes the open D, G and high E strings.

The song's form is built from a repeating four-bar progression, and at the end of each four-bar group, as shown in bars 4 and 8 in this example, signature single-note fills are added, which set up the return to the top of the form.

FIGURE 3 is an eight-bar solo played over this same repeating progression in Ingram's style. Utilizing a wah pedal with a nod toward Hendrix's sonic palette, the solo is rooted in lines based on the E minor pentatonic scale (E, G, A, B, D) and the E blues scale (E, G, A, B♭, B, D). It begins with a heavily vibrato-ed whole-step bend from D up to E, played on the B string's 15th fret. The phrasing in bars 1 and 2 is based primarily on 16th-notes and 16th-note triplets. In bar 3, a quick descending phrase is played across beats 3 and 4 in a rhythm of 32nd notes, à la Ingram's fiery soloing approach.

The remainder of the solo is played primarily in 16th notes, with an emphasis on lines that evoke a clear sense of melodic development, combined with a beautifully

FIG. 3

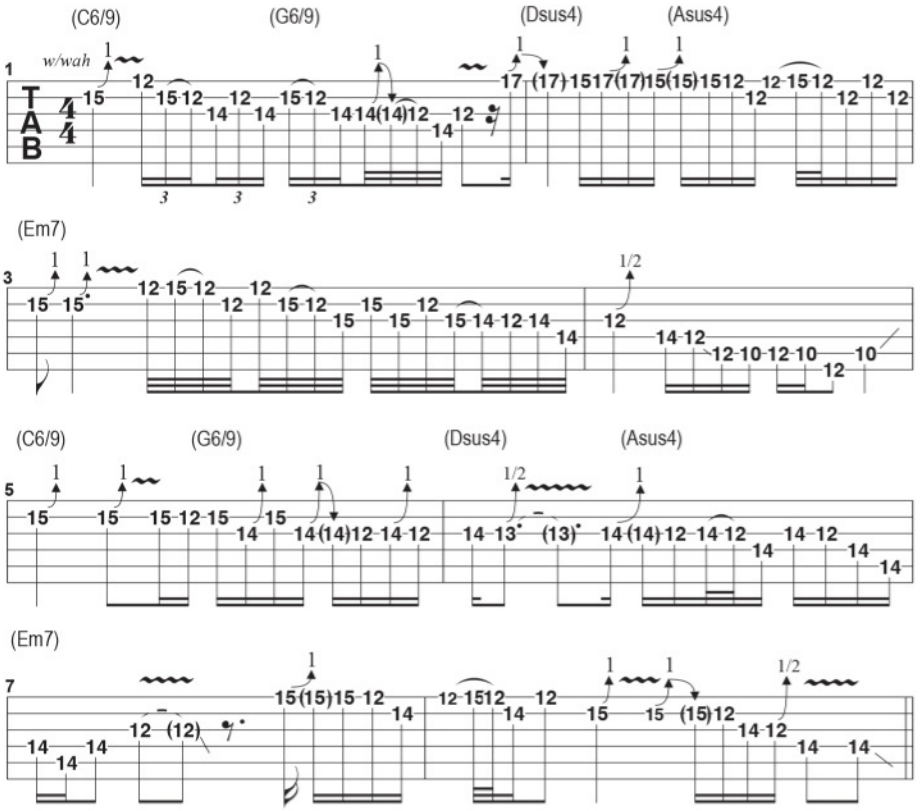


FIG. 4 MARCUS MACHADO

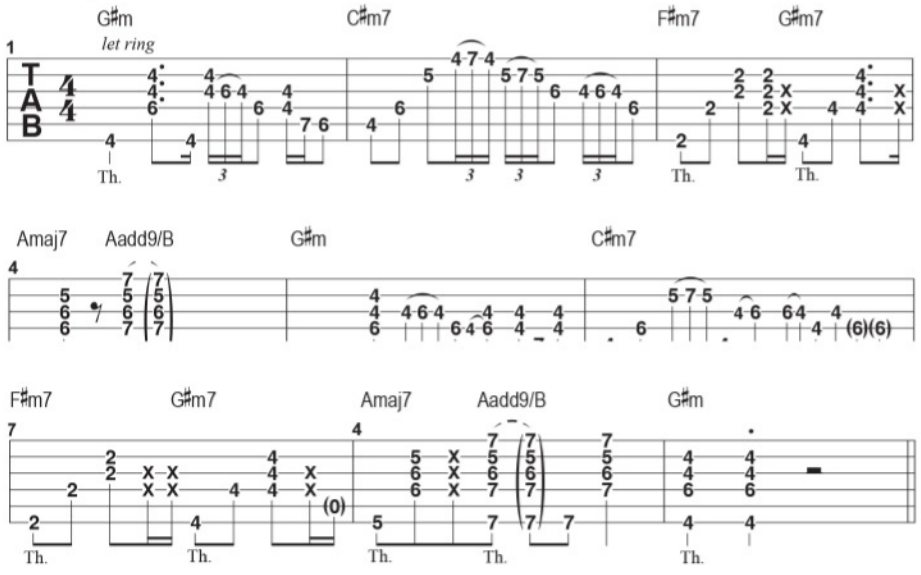
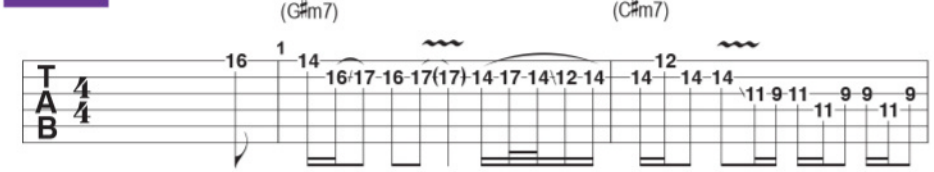


FIG. 5



controlled finger vibrato. Signature elements like these make Ingram's soloing sound so pleasing and appealing to listen to. Along with the influence of Hendrix, one can also pick up on techniques that Jimi had learned from listening to his heroes, such as Albert King, B.B. King, Buddy Guy and Otis Rush.

MARCUS MACHADO

MARCUS MACHADO TIPS his hat to his primary influences with the title of his debut album, 2021's *Aquarius Purple*, as the guitarist cites Hendrix and Prince as major inspirations. Marcus' music is more rooted in classic and contemporary R&B/soul than Faye's or Ingram's, but one can hear elements of Hendrix's influence in his playing, as well as the influence of the great, pioneering R&B/soul singer, songwriter and guitarist Curtis Mayfield.

FIGURES 4 and **5** are played in Machado's style. **FIGURE 4** presents a repeating four-bar rhythm part that evokes the classic soul style, built from the progression G♯m - C♯m7 - F♯m - G♯m7 - Amaj7 - Aadd9/B. We're in the implied key of E major here, though an E chord is never actually played. As shown throughout the figure, the initial G♯m and C♯m7 chords are embellished with single-string hammer/pulls, a technique Henxdrix learned from Mayfield and Bobby Womack and can be heard on "Little Wing," "Villanova Junction" and "Castles Made of Sand." Be sure to keep a firm grip on each chord voicing as you perform these melodic embellishments, allowing the held notes to ring.

FIGURE 5 offers a solo played in Machado's style. The lines are firmly rooted in the E major scale (E, F♯, G♯, A, B, C♯, D♯), with specific pitches targeting the underlying chord tones in order to strengthen the connection between the solo and the progression. For example, the solo begins on a G♯ note, the root note of the accompanying G♯m chord, after which the line descends and lands on C♯, just as the C♯m7 chord is sounded.

Across most of bars 5 and 6, a fast descending phrase is played in a combination of 16th notes and 32nd notes, articulated repeatedly with hammer-ons, pull-offs and finger slides. One can hear Hendrix utilize this technique in his solos on "May This Be Love," "Hear My Train a' Comin'" and "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)."

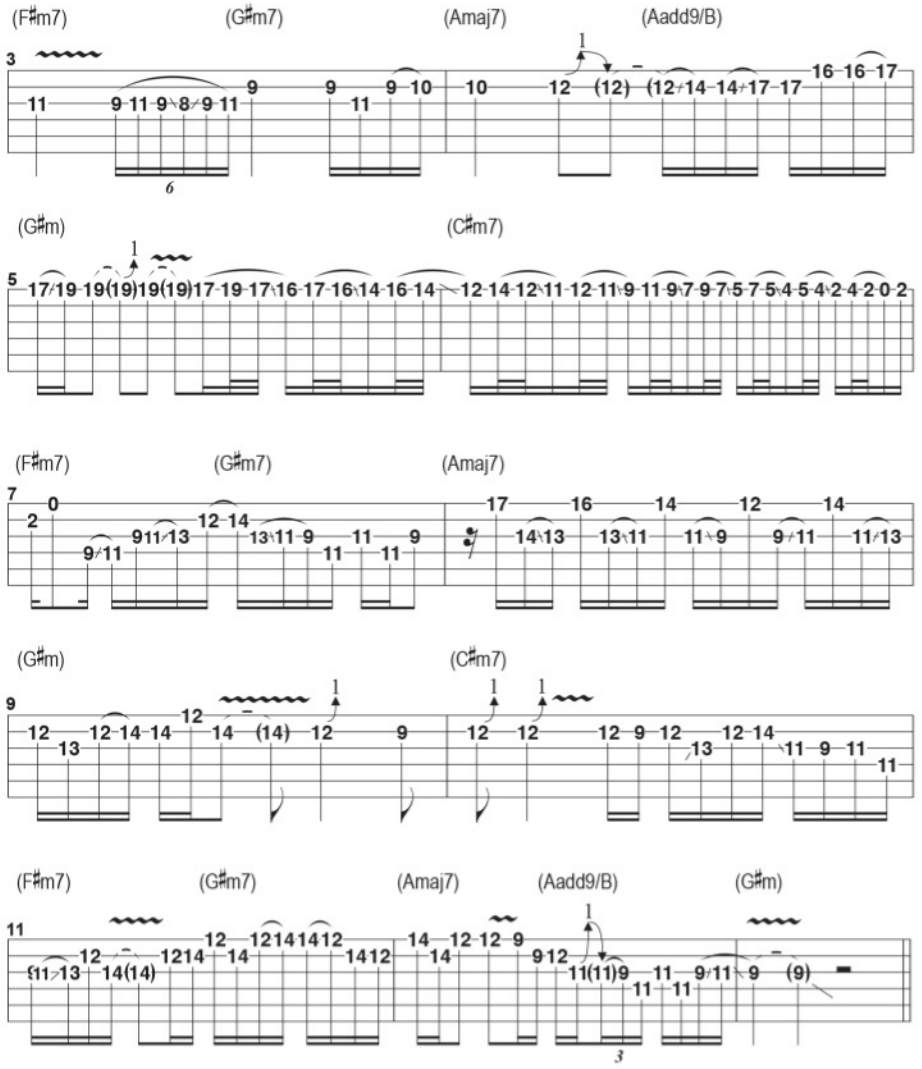
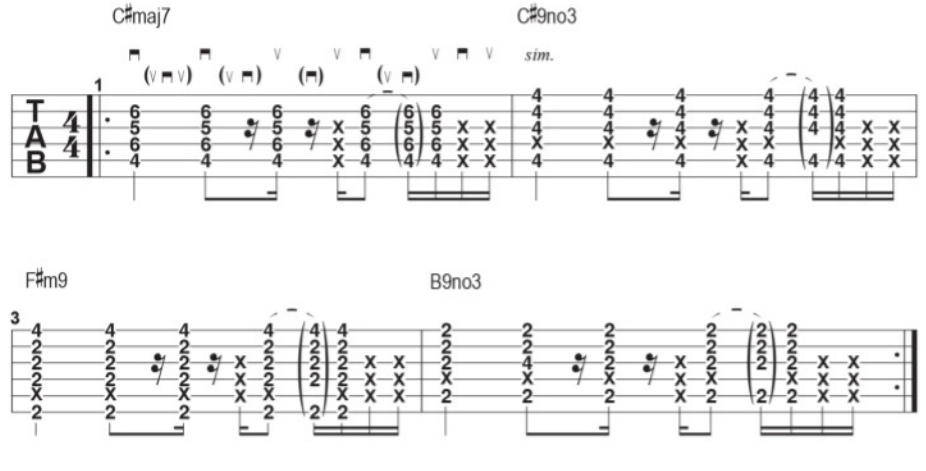


FIG. 6 AYLA TESLER-MABÉ



The improvisation in bar 8 is based on sliding octave shapes fretted on the high E and G strings. Hendrix employed sliding octaves in many of his songs and solos, prime examples being "Third Stone from the Sun" and "Villanova Junction." The example wraps up with lines based on the E major pentatonic scale (E, F♯, G♯, B, C♯), a scale that works well over all of the chords in the progression.

AYLA TESLER-MABÉ

JUST 22, AYLA Tesler-Mabé is a guitarist and multi-instrumentalist from

Vancouver, Canada. Tesler-Mabé has a very unique style, marrying contemporary R&B music with an aggressive, blues-drenched soloing style that also combines elements of jazz.

Set to a funky, moderate-tempo R&B/soul groove, **FIGURE 6** is a repeating four-bar progression that moves from C♯maj7 to C♯9no3 to F♯m9 to B9. All of the chords are played with the same syncopated rhythmic phrasing and flowing 16th-note pendulum strumming technique, with fret-hand muted "dead-string" accents added (indicated by X's).

FIGURE 7 presents an improvised solo played over this progression in Ayla's style. It sticks primarily with the C♯ major pentatonic scale (C♯, D♯, E♯, G♯, A♯), with nods toward the influence of Hendrix, as well as that of B.B. King. Tesler-Mabé also uses a hard pick attack, which adds expressiveness and assertiveness to her lines. Over the F♯m9 chord, the solo moves into jazzier territory, with the notes of an Amaj7 arpeggio (A, C♯, E, G♯) superimposed over F♯m7, implying an F♯m9 sound (F♯, A, C♯, E, G♯), starting on the minor 3rd, A.

In the second half of bar 5 into bar 6, the solo moves up to 14th position with blues-type phrases played out of what is often referred to as the "B.B. box," leaning on the notes A♯, C♯, D♯, E♯ and G♯.

JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR

Another of today's premiere guitarists is Britain's Joanne Shaw Taylor, whose 2021 release *The Blues Album* reached Number 1 on the *Billboard* Blues Albums chart. Shaw Taylor is also a multiple winner of the best Female Vocalist and Songwriter of the Year at the British Blues Awards shows. *The Blues Album*, as well as *Blues from the Heart Live* and *Nobody's Fool*, were released on Joe Bonamassa's Keeping the Blues Alive label.

In 2017, Shaw Taylor released a video of herself performing live at Hendrix's one-time London flat at 23 Brook St. in London's West End. "Without Jimi Hendrix's music, I wouldn't be the songwriter or guitarist I am," Shaw Taylor said.

FIGURE 8 shows a repeating one-bar riff, played in a $\frac{12}{8}$ shuffle feel. This one-bar "boogie" riff is reminiscent of the music of John Lee Hooker and Canned Heat's "On the Road Again," as well as Billy Gibbons' riffing on ZZ

FIG. 7

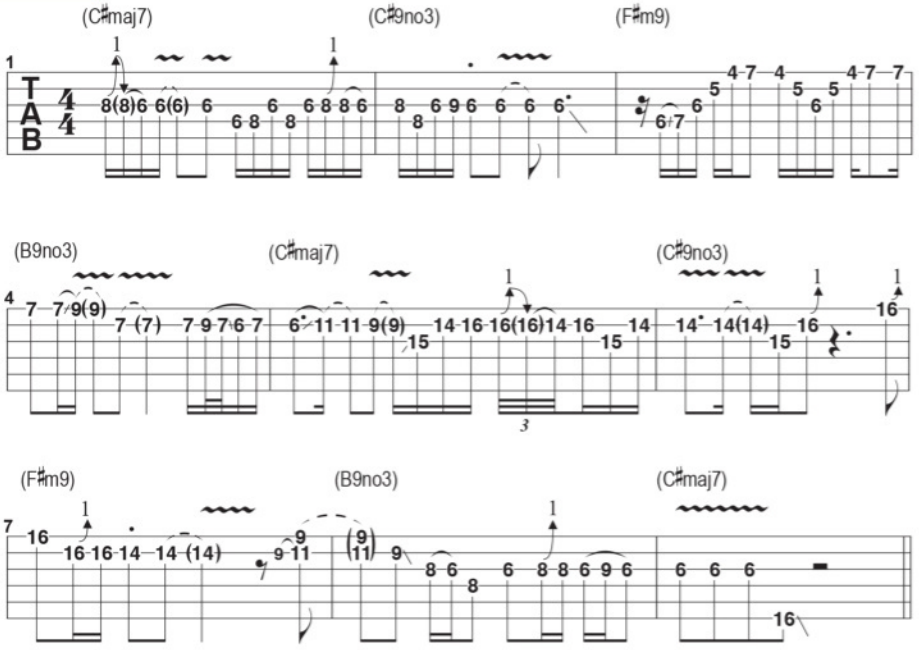


FIG. 8 JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR

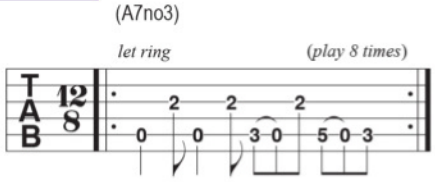


FIG. 9

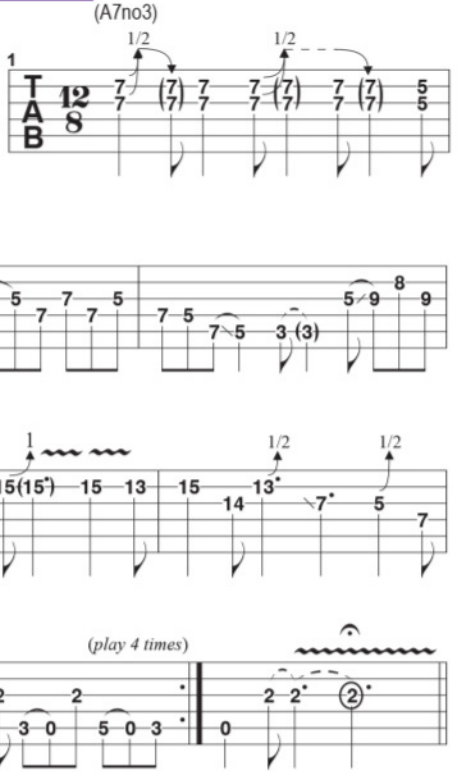
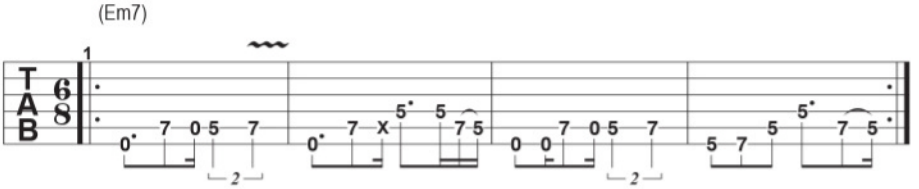


FIG. 10 AYRON JONES



COVER FEATURE

Top's "La Grange." With the A chord held firmly at the 2nd fret, this part emulates the sound of open A tuning, à la John Lee Hooker, as a low-note figure is added and articulated with pull-offs.

FIGURE 9 presents a solo played in Shaw Taylor's style, kicking off with two-string bends sounded by barring the 3rd finger across the G and B strings. Two-string bend-and-release licks like these were pioneered by T-Bone Walker and Chuck Berry, who were both primary influences on Hendrix.

In bars 3 and 6, the phrase slides up to E, on the G string's 9th fret, and then alternates between E and the G note above it, on the 8th fret of the B string, in repeating groups of eighth notes. This two-note shape then shifts up to 13th position, with phrases based on A minor pentatonic (A, C, D, E, G). Bar 7 features a fast slide down the G string back to 5th position. Quick positional shifts like these are a hallmark of Hendrix's playing style, as well as those of Gibbons and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

AYRON JONES

Seattle's Ayron Jones blends his heavy blues-rock style with elements of grunge, soul and hip-hop. On "Emily," he leans in heavily with a Hendrix vibe, performing in a guitar-bass-drums power trio.

FIGURE 10 offers a heavy primary riff played in the key E and in $\frac{6}{8}$ meter. Hendrix leaned on open low E-based riffs for many of his most well-known songs, such as "Purple Haze" and "Stone Free." This four-bar riff gives way to sliding two-note chordal figures fretted on the A and D strings, which also include the open G string.

FIGURE 11 is a solo played in Jones' style. We start off in the 12th- position box shape for E minor pentatonic (E, G, A, B, D) with an oblique bend; a note on the G string is bent while a note on the B string is held stationary. In bar 3, the phrase shifts quickly down and then back up the G string. Hendrix employed these techniques in many of his solos, such as those in "Machine Gun" and "Spanish Castle Magic." The lick in bar 6 is a fast flurry of notes, reflecting a technique often referred to as "cramming." The solo then wraps up with melodic lines that sit firmly in the heavy $\frac{6}{8}$ groove. GW

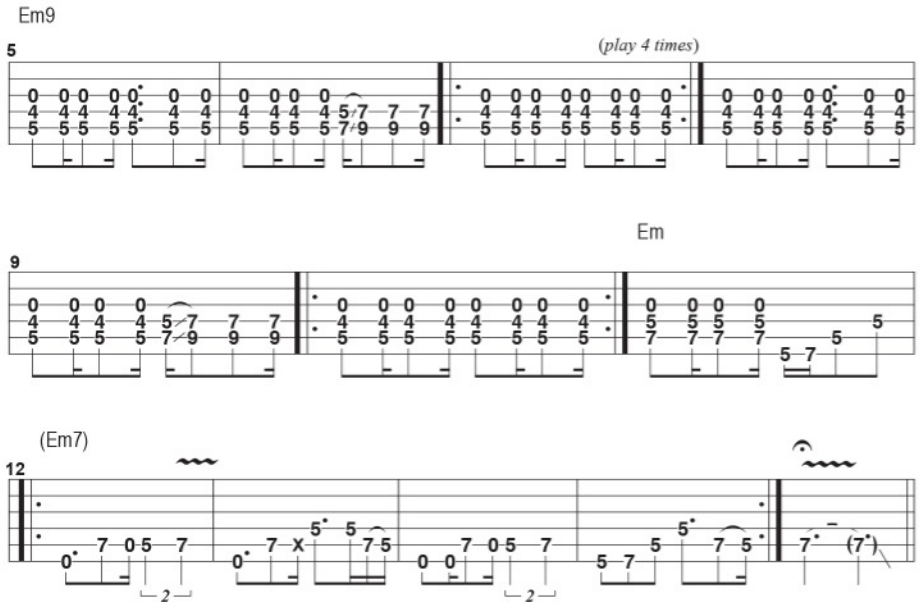
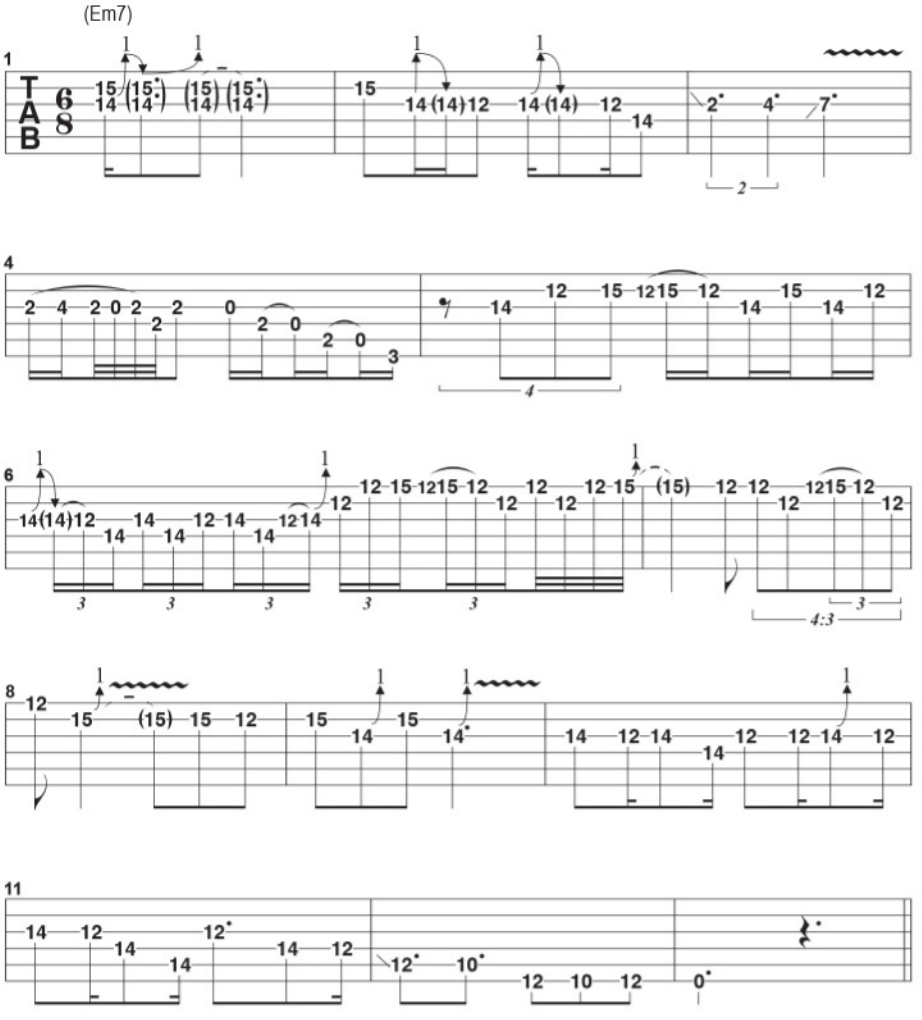


FIG. 11



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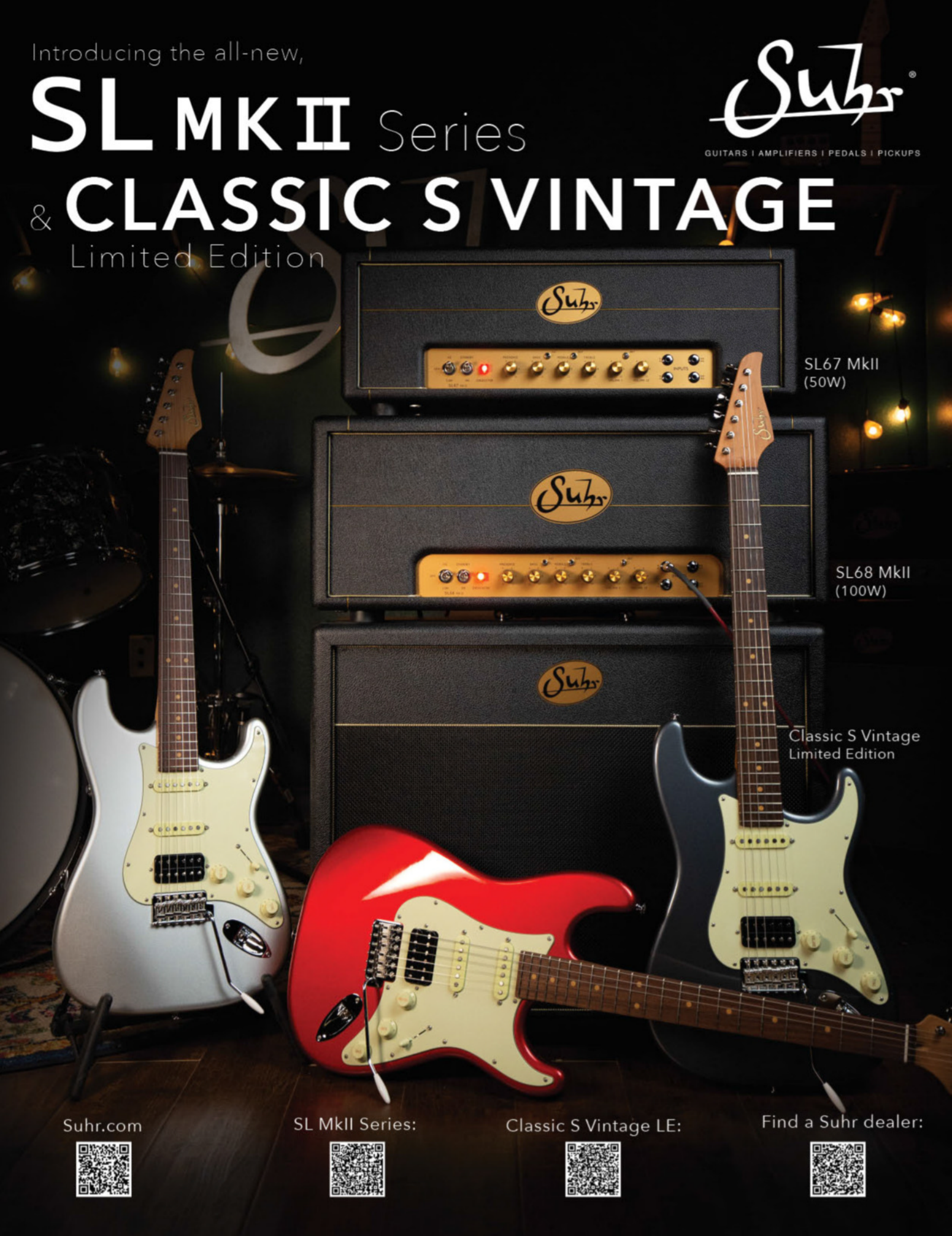

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PLAY with fire

How Brian Jones, Mick Taylor and Ronnie Wood shaped (and shape) the Rolling Stones

By **ALAN DI PERNA**

JONES, TAYLOR AND Wood... It sounds more like the name of a law firm than the surnames of the three phenomenal guitarists who have served alongside Keith Richards during the Rolling Stones' six-decade-plus career. Now that they've announced and teased *Hackney Diamonds*, their first album of orignal material since 2005's *A Bigger Bang*, it's an ideal time to reflect on the contributions that Brian Jones, Mick Taylor and Ronnie Wood have made to the evolution, vitality and uncanny longevity of the Stones. Each guitarist's tenure with the group — seven years for Jones, five for Taylor and an amazing 48 for Wood — serves to define and delineate three key phases in the Stones' stellar career. Here's how it all happened.

[*from left*] The Rolling Stones' Keith Richards, Mick Jagger and Ronnie Wood during production of the band's "Respectable" music video in 1978

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

1962–1969

BRIAN JONES: THE ROCK STAR AS TRAGIC HERO

IT'S NOT JUST that Brian Jones founded and named the Rolling Stones in 1962 — giving birth to one of the most important groups in all of rock history. That alone secures his place of high honor in the rock pantheon. But Jones also was an archetype and icon in so many other ways. One of the first young, white Britons to play blues-style slide guitar, his role in bringing the venerable, African-American blues idiom (and blues guitar particularly) to the forefront of rock makes him the godfather of a tradition that includes British guitar greats like Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Peter Green, Mick Taylor, Alvin Lee and so many others.

With his impeccably coiffed blond mane, boldly extravagant fashion sense and dazzling arsenal of ultra-flash guitars, Jones was one of the Sixties' most influential guitar heroes. He consorted with Swingin' London's glamorous models and actresses, hung out with Bob Dylan and journeyed to Morocco in 1967 to smoke hash and pioneer the world music scene. The Pied Piper of the psychedelic explosion, Jones adorned the Stones' mid-Sixties oeuvre with a rainbow orchestra of harpsichords, flutes, sitars, dulcimers and Mellotrons. In this, he played a key role in forging the baroque pop/chamber pop subgenre that's still flourishing today. He introduced the Jimi Hendrix Experience to the audience for the trio's American debut at the seminal Monterey Pop Festival in 1967. He was always in the vanguard.

The dark side of all this was that Jones was deeply unhappy in his fame — conflicted, ambivalent and embittered. When he lost creative control of the Stones to Mick Jagger and Keith Richards in the mid Sixties, he went into a prolonged tailspin, abusing dope and booze in ever-increasing amounts until he ended up dead in a swimming pool at age 27 in July 1969. In so doing, he became a charter member of the infamous "27 Club" — musical legends who died too soon and whose ranks also include Robert Johnson, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison, Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse. Even in death, Jones rolled with the best.

"Brian was an impressive musician," Keith Richards told me in 1997. "Very promising. He was a sax player as well, to start with. He was dedicated to playing in those early days. I'll tell you what screwed Brian up: it was fame. Something snapped in him the minute that came."

"Brian was pretty much the leader," Glyn Johns told an early Brian Jones biographer. "He was certainly the spokesman for the group to me"

Having already played with London blues kingpin Alexis Korner and preceding Eric Clapton in a group called the Roosters, Jones was definitely heavier business than Jagger and Richards when the three first teamed up in 1962. He was the kingpin, but the blues made a brotherhood of the three young musicians. In those hard-scrabble days before fame tore them apart, Brian and Keith would spend hours huddled together with their guitars in a dingy, unheated flat they shared with Jagger in London's Edith Grove. They'd riff along to the precious collection of African-American blues and r&b records the three aficionados had amassed. From this emerged the propulsive, tight-yet-fluid two-guitar style that Keith Richards has ever since called "an ancient form of weaving."

"When Brian and I started playing together," Keef told me, "we were listening to a lot of Jimmy Reed and Muddy Waters — the two-guitar thing. The weaving. We did it so much. Which is the way you have to do it. So we knew both parts. You get it to where you get it really flash, and you suddenly switch. The one playing the rhythm picks up the lead, and vice versa."

One of the great rhythmic paradigms of rock guitar history, the sound Jones and Richards made together was first committed to tape on March 11, 1963. The Stones' debut demo session was engineered at London's IBC Studios by soon to be legendary producer/engineer Glyn Johns (the Beatles, Who, Led Zeppelin, Clapton, etc.). It was immediately clear to Johns who was in charge at that point.

"Brian was pretty much the leader," Johns told early Jones biographer Mandy Aftel. "He was certainly the spokesman for the group to me. This was their first recording session and Brian was very much concerned about the sounds that I

DAVID REDFERN/REDFERNS

Brian Jones on the set of *Thank Your Lucky Stars* at Alpha TV Studios in Birmingham, England, May 8, 1966. The episode, which aired May 14 (and can be found on YouTube), features performances of "Lady Jane" and "Paint It, Black"

would produce on tape. He had an exact rhythm and blues sound he wanted — the Jimmy Reed type sound, which was virtually unheard of."

That murky, mysterious sonic miasma was what made early Stones singles like "Tell Me" and "Time Is on My Side" so utterly fascinating when they were first released in 1964. Tone was Jones' obsession. His guitar contribution to the early Stones *oeuvre* breaks down into two main areas. For one, there's his raw, raunchy, open-tuned slide playing on tracks like "I'm a King Bee," "Mona (I Need You Baby)," "Grown Up Wrong" and "Little Red Rooster." Secondly, there's Jones' co-equal role with Richards in forging the gritty, two-guitar grind of the Stones' mid-Sixties sound. With equal aplomb, Jones could crank out a hooky lead riff on "The Last Time" or pound out a pumping rhythm on tracks like "Satisfaction" or "19th Nervous Breakdown." He took a slide to a Rickenbacker 360 12-string electric to create the Middle-Eastern flavored riff on "Mother's Little Helper," doubling Richards, who also played slide on an electric 12-string.

Jones' tone-mania led him to acquire new guitars as voraciously as he collected new clothes and new girlfriends. He did much to popularize the Gibson Firebird, which was still quite a new and daring instrument at the time, first introduced in 1963. But the guitars with which Jones is most closely associated are his two white, teardrop-shaped Vox MK III prototypes, handmade for him by Vox design engineer Mick Bennett. The lute-like body shape was very innovative, and the MK III became a garage band classic as soon as the first production models hit the street in 1964.

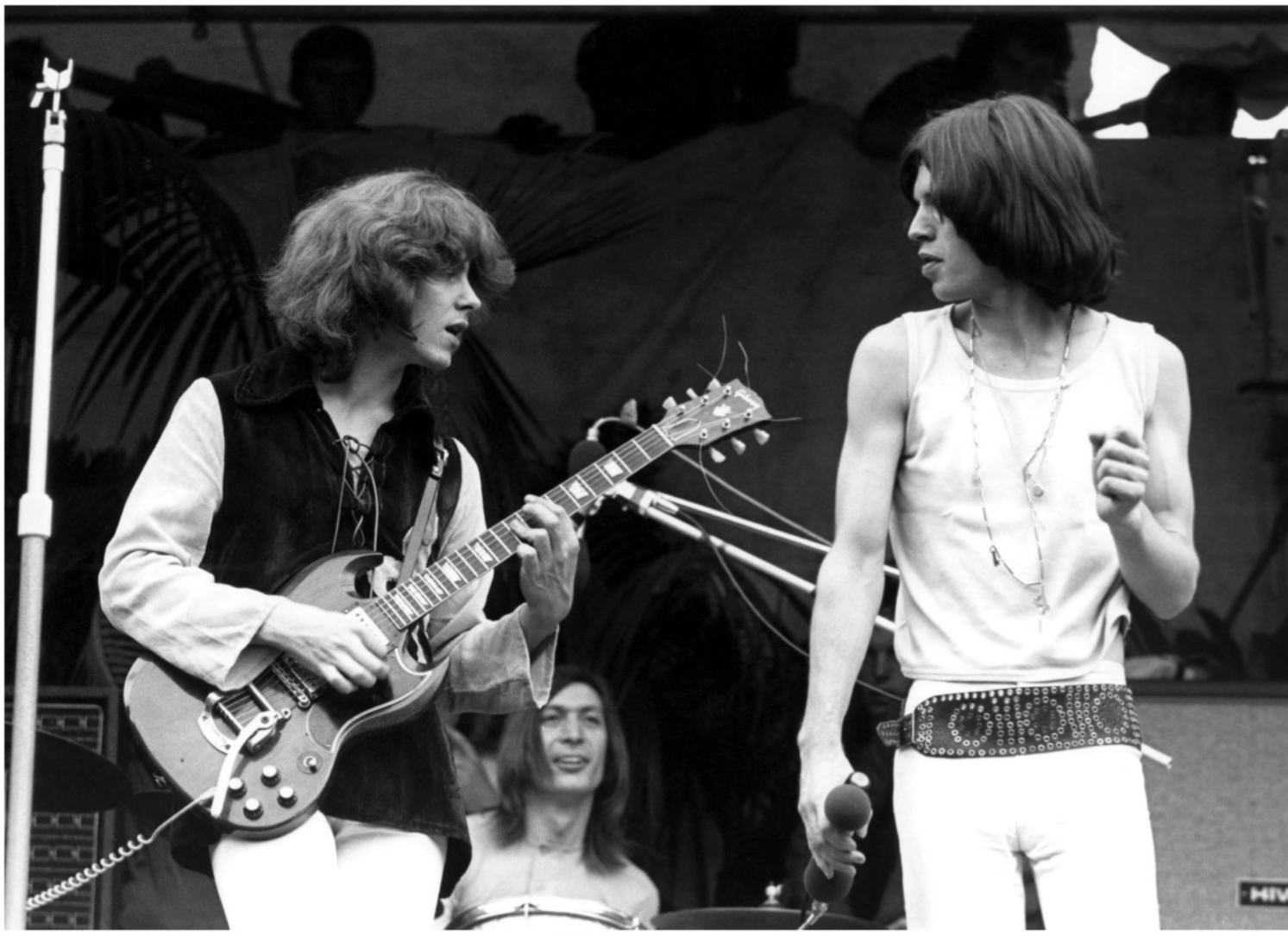
"Brian would hop from instrument to instrument," Richards told me in 2002. "He was always searching for another sound. As a musician, he was very versatile. He'd be just as happy playing the marimba or bells as he was guitar. Sometimes it was, 'Oh, make up your mind what sound you're going to have, Brian!' 'cause he'd keep changing guitars. He wasn't one of those guys who say, 'Right, here's my ax.' Brian had so many."

Despite Jones' growing alienation from the Stones, he was deeply enthusiastic about the return to basics represented by Mick and Keith's 1968 song, "Jumpin' Jack Flash." "We've been in the studio all morning and we're going back to rock and roll!," Jones excitedly told a girlfriend. "They got this 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' and it's really great."

Indeed a new era was dawning for the Stones — a return to the primordial blues, r&b, rock 'n' roll roots they'd first dug into with Jones. It's nice to think that Jones lived to contribute to the glorious, bluesy rebirth that is the Stones' 1968 masterpiece, *Beggars Banquet*. His plaintive slide playing on "No Expectations" brings the story full circle, returning to the guitar style that had launched Jones' career.

The Stones' longtime producer Jimmy Miller said, "As a musician [*Brian*] should be remembered for the brilliant bottleneck country guitar work on *Beggars Banquet* and for his interpretation of the blues played honestly, as a white man."

Sadly debilitated by drugs and booze, Jones hung on long enough to strum an autoharp on Keith Richards' song "You've Got the Silver" on *Let It Bleed*. Shortly thereafter, in June 1969, Jagger, Richards and Watts fired Jones from the Rolling Stones. Less than a month later, he was dead. His passing marked the end of one of the greatest eras in rock music and the career of the Rolling Stones. To this day, his DNA is all over the storied group.



PETER SANDERS/REDFERNS

1969–1974

MICK TAYLOR: GOLDEN BOY OF THE STONES' GOLDEN AGE

THE FOUR-YEAR period that spans *Beggars Banquet* in 1968 and *Exile on Main St.* in 1972 is, for many, the absolute zenith of the Stones' career. Sure, they did amazing work both before and after, but the '68-'72 period was one of those magical moments when pop culture, the stars and the Stones were all aligned.

A new decade was dawning. Crawling from the wreckage of the Sixties, John Lennon was revisiting his roots in Fifties rock 'n' roll. Bob Dylan had gone into an introspectively folksy acoustic mode. The Stones had ditched the dandelions and rainbows of the psychedelic era for something more earthy and grounded. Meanwhile a new breed of blues-based virtuoso guitarists like Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, Mike Bloomfield, Peter Green, Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page and many others had placed amped-up, single-note pentatonic riffing at the forefront of rock music.

Of Keef's three co-guitarists in the Stones, Taylor's tenure was the briefest, but, in many regards, the most well-remembered

All of which made Mick Taylor a perfect choice to replace Jones. At just 17 years old, Taylor had succeeded Clapton and Green as the guitarist in John Mayall's Bluesbreakers — a band that had set the gold standard for British blues guitar mastery. Mayall himself called Jagger to recommend Taylor. As did Ian Stewart, the erstwhile, and brilliant, Rolling Stones pianist who'd been Jones' oldest and closest comrade within the Stones' circle.

Taylor made his recorded debut with the Rolling Stones on their July 1969 single "Honky Tonk Women." One of the greatest rock records of all time, it announces the arrival of a triumphant period for the Rolling Stones, with Keef rock solid in his recently discovered five-string open-G tuning and Taylor blazing away in six-string standard.

[*from left*] The Stones' Mick Taylor (playing a Gibson SG with a Bigsby B5), Charlie Watts and Mick Jagger perform in London's Hyde Park in July 1969

But Taylor — a teetotaling vegetarian when he joined the Rolling Stones — never seemed to fit in completely. Several years younger than the other Stones, Taylor would always seem a bit fresh-faced and naive amidst the notorious rock libertines known at the time as "Satan's Jesters." This mismatched lifestyle stood in stark contrast to the phenomenal musical chemistry going down during this period. Music critic Robert Palmer Jr. summed up the situation quite succinctly:

"Taylor is the most accomplished musician who ever served as a Stone. A blues guitarist with a jazzman's flair for melodic invention, Taylor was never a rock and roller and never a showman."

Taylor made his album debut with the Stones on their 1969 album, *Let It Bleed*, trading licks with Keef on "Live with Me." He also overdubbed slide guitar on "Country Honk," taking up the bottleneck role that Brian Jones had abdicated, and slipping into the Stones lineup as Jones slipped away. By the time the Stones released their next album, *Sticky Fingers,* in 1971, Taylor had been fully integrated into the lineup. He and Richards had forged a tight, punchy, two-guitar rhythmic and melodic approach. The way their guitars dart and twine around one another in the intro to "Brown Sugar" is sheer six-string poetry. Taylor's spontaneously improvised, Latin-tinged, Gibson ES-345 archtop solo on the outro of "Can't You Hear Me Knockin' " is another landmark Stones guitar moment.

Taylor also notably played a 1961 Gibson SG and 1959 Les Paul with the Stones. He shared Jones' affection for Gibson Firebirds as well. The Stones were in the midst of an Ampeg amp endorsement when they convened to record their double-disc masterpiece, *Exile on Main St*. That album's opening track, "Rocks Off" is another two-guitar Stones classic, replete with a balls-out outro solo from Taylor. He's a vital part of an album that routinely tops Best Rock Record of All Time lists.

The live side of Taylor's work with the Stones was generously captured on disc — the seminal *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* — and on film—the Maysles Brothers' landmark 1970 documentary, *Gimme Shelter,* and 1974's *Ladies and Gentlemen: The Rolling Stones*. Post *Exile*, he played on two more Stones studio albums, *Goat's Head Soup* and *It's Only Rock 'n Roll*. And then he was gone — his departure taking his fellow Stones and the band's fans somewhat by surprise.

"Mick's a lovely player," Richards told me. "I never understood why he left. He's always been a bit restless and a little uneasy inside his skin. But I enjoyed playing with him. I learned a lot from him. We learned a lot about guitar playing from each other. Because he's another great weaver. His tone and his touch and his melodic ideas wow me. I'd just hoped he would have gone on to bigger and better things than he did. I thought it was an impetuous move."

Publicly, Taylor explained his abrupt departure by saying he'd become bored musically and that the enormous entity that is the Rolling Stones had taken his life over. What went unmentioned at the time was that the clean-cut guitarist had also fallen under the spell of Dame Heroin and wanted to get out before flirtation turned to thralldom.

Tensions had also arisen between Taylor and Richards, as Taylor's songwriting role within the Stones grew while Keef sank deeper into his own heroin-addicted lethargy. Taylor and Jagger co-wrote "Moonlight Mile" and "Sway" from *Sticky Fingers* and "Till the Next Goodbye" and "Time Waits for No One" on *It's Only Rock 'n Roll*, released in 1974. Taylor was especially fond of his guitar solo on the latter track.

"I think it's probably the best thing I ever did with the Rolling Stones," he told *GW*'s Damian Fanelli in 2012.

Taylor had expected to receive co-writing credit on those tracks. When he didn't, the animosity grew. In the middle of a party at rock entrepreneur Robert Stigwood's home, Taylor informed Jagger that he no longer wished to be a Rolling Stone.

Of Keith Richards' three co-guitarists in the Rolling Stones, Taylor's tenure was the briefest, but, in many regards, the most well-remembered today. While Taylor would go on to do much good work after leaving the group, he'd never again achieve the level of fame he'd attained in the Stones. Much like his predecessor, Brian Jones, he was essentially too much of a blues purist to ride rock 'n' roll's roller coaster of fame.

1975–The present

RONNIE WOOD: KEEPER OF THE FLAME

NUMEROUS LEGENDARY AND respected guitarists were in the running to take Mick Taylor's place in the Stones. The list includes Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck, Steve Marriott, Rory Gallagher, Shuggie Otis, Harvey Mandel and Chris Spedding, among others. Many were called, as the saying goes, but only one was chosen.

There are so many reasons Ronnie Wood has proved to be a perfect match for Keith Richards and the Rolling Stones. He sprang from the same scene as the Stones, playing guitar with a mid-Sixties r&b outfit called the Birds (who have absolutely nothing to do with the Byrds, the American band behind "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "Chestnut Mare") and also attending some of the Stones' earliest gigs at London clubs like the Crawdaddy. So he knew where the Stones were coming from, literally.

"I was their biggest fan when I joined them," Wood told me in 1997. "And I still am, while being in the band."

Also, unlike both of his predecessors, Wood was no stranger to rock stardom when he first joined the Stones in 1975. Though originally a guitarist, the ever-versatile Wood served as bassist in the Jeff Beck Group, performing on the landmark Beck albums *Truth* and *Beck-Ola* and jamming with Jimi Hendrix at the Scene club in New York. From there, Wood had gone on to play guitar with Seventies hitmakers Faces, fronted by former Jeff Beck Group singer Rod Stewart.

So he'd experienced enough of rock 'n' roll's fast-lane craziness not to get spooked by the whole thing. In fact, he seemed rather to enjoy it — perhaps a little too much at times. But while he has struggled with addiction issues, Wood has shown much the same uncanny ability to bounce back from oblivion as his Rolling Stones co-guitarist.

Wood made his recording debut with the Stones playing guitar on three tracks from their 1976 album *Black and Blue* — the funk-inflected "Hey Negrita" the straight-out rocker "Crazy Mama" and a cover of the Earl Donaldson reggae classic "Cherry Oh Baby" (later a hit for UB40).

The Stones were moving in new stylistic directions in the mid-Seventies. Wood's performance on *Black and Blue* proved that he could go there with them. Musically, he's the perfect utility man — able to insert himself gracefully into any musical context, as he's consistently demonstrated over the course of 48 years, 11 studio albums, seven live albums and countless live shows with the Rolling Stones.

Much like Brian Jones, Wood is a musical chameleon, albeit in a different way. Jones was a multi-instrumentalist; Wood has, for the most part, expressed his own tonal adventurousness within the guitar realm. He inherited the Jones/Taylor role of slide guitarist in the Stones, but has expanded on that tonal palette to include lap steel, pedal steel, Dobro and B-benders. A man of many guitars, he's also versatile and supple on six-string electrics and acous-

Ronnie Wood [*left*] and Keith Richards on stage at NYC's Madison Square Garden, May 7, 1979

RICHARD E. AARON/REDFERNS

tics in standard tuning. Over the years, he and Richards have developed the kind of intuitive "Vulcan mind meld" approach to guitar arrangement that Keef enjoyed with Jones and Taylor.

"We just sit down and hack things out," Wood explained in my '97 interview. "The great thing about offstage, when Keith and I are together, is that we talk, more or less, through our guitars. We never say 'you do this and I'll do that. I'll play the riff and you come in and out. We weave."

This approach works very well for Richards too, as he told me in a 1997 interview. "I'm impressed by everything Ronnie does. He's a great guy to play with. A great guy to hang with. You get two guitars and Ronnie Wood in a room and the rest of the world will go by."

Wood's role within the Rolling Stones is twofold, really. On the one hand, he acts as custodian of the guitar legacy laid down by Jones and Taylor during the Stones' first dozen or so years. As concerts have come to overshadow albums in the current music industry, this role has been especially crucial — particularly since the departure of the band's original bassist Bill Wyman and the 2021 passing of Charlie Watts.

"Brian Jones had a very distinctive rhythmic input into the band, which I try and recreate on things like 'You Can't Always Get What You Want,'" Wood told me. "And on songs like 'All Down the Line,' I try and echo what Mick Taylor did as well. I think that's part of the song — the melody line he does as a solo."

But equally important is the role that Wood has played in moving the Stones into the modern era. His guitar work is essential to iconic tracks like "Miss You," "Beast of Burden" and "Start Me Up," bringing the Rolling Stones through the disco era and into a new mode of tough, stripped-down contemporary rock classicism that has been their modus operandi ever since — a key ingredient in their phenomenal longevity. Latter-day albums like *Voodoo Lounge, Steel Wheels* and *Bridges to Babylon* represent a third golden era for the Stones — a triumphant victory lap in which Wood has played no small role.

He has also manned the bass for tracks like "Emotional Rescue" and "Dance Part 1." The latter song, from 1980's *Emotional Rescue*, was also one of Wood's first co-writing credits with the Stones. Credit for songwriting input had been a deal breaker for Mick Taylor, but through patience, perseverance and bonhomie, Wood has been able to gain much-deserved recognition.

"I spent many years being credited for 'inspiration'," he laughed as he told me. "Let's put it that way. But I didn't mind waiting. It's a big nut to crack, that Jagger/Richards songwriting team. I suppose it's like trying to get a song in with Lennon and McCartney. I like to leave the songwriting for the Stones to Mick and Keith, 'cause they are the institution. But whenever there's a gap, I'll gladly offer to fill it. You don't get anywhere if you don't try."

The Rolling Stones' most recent available studio album — at the time of this writing, anyway — is 2016's *Blue and Lonesome*, a down-and-dirty, live-in-the-studio rendition of 12-bar blues classics from legends like Willie Dixon, Little Walter and Jimmy Reed. It's a loving homage to the music that first inspired the Stones at their inception. Well more than half a century down the line, the record — and Ronnie Wood's contribution therein — might well have made the heart of the Stones' founder Brian Jones swell with pride. The same could be said for "Angry," the first single from *Hackney Diamonds,* which proves that the Stones' perpetual riff engine is still in fine form. GW

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SOUND CHECK

the gear in review

79
BOSS
DM-101 Delay Machine

80
CIARI GUITARS
Ascender Standard

81
MOD ELECTRONICS
Phase/Off

Second Wind

FENDER VINTERA II **By Chris Gill**

FENDER'S VINTERA SERIES electric guitars and basses have remained a big hit since their introduction back in 2019, thanks to the models' designs inspired by various vintage eras (including a few examples with modern refinements and modifications) and wallet-friendly prices. The brand new Vintera II series remains true to those basic ideals while dispensing with the "modified vintage" products, offering 16 new models with only a few crossovers in common with the previous Vintera series (namely a handful of Strat, Tele and Jazz Bass models). The new lineup is more expansive and inclusive, providing '50s, '60s and '70s Strat and Tele models, '50s and '60s Precision Bass models as well as coveted "cult" axes like the '50s Jazzmaster, '70s Competition Mustang guitar and bass, '60s Telecaster Thinline, '60s Bass VI and '70s Telecaster Bass.

We wish we could have looked at all 16 models, but the Vintera II '60s Telecaster, '70s Telecaster Deluxe with Tremolo and '50s Jazzmaster guitars that Fender sent us provide a good overview of the lineup.

FEATURES One of the most warmly welcomed features of the Vintera II series is the use of rosewood fingerboards on nine models (the other seven models have maple fingerboards) instead of the previous series' use of pau ferro. The rosewood fretboards on our Vintera II '60s Telecaster and '50s Jazzmaster models exuded an enhanced vintage vibe thanks to a rich chocolate brown hue that is darker than the previous pau ferro material.

"When it comes to sequels, the new Fender Vintera II series is fully in *Empire Strikes Back* and *Road Warrior* territory"

The '60s Telecaster's classic specs include an alder body, maple neck with the aforementioned rosewood fretboard with a 7.25-inch radius plus an early-Sixties C-shape profile and 21 vintage tall frets, vintage-style mid-Sixties single-coil Tele pickups, three-saddle bridge with slotted steel saddles and ribbed-enclosure tuners. Hardware includes a four-bolt neck plate, three-ply pickguard, three-position blade pickup switch with Top-Hat style switch-tip and chrome-plated flat-top knurled knobs for the master volume and master tone controls. Fiesta Red or Sonic Blue finishes are offered.

Features of the '70s Telecaster Deluxe with Tremolo include an alder body with belly contour and maple neck with maple fretboard, 9.5-inch radius, U-shape profile, 21 vintage-tall frets, large Seventies-style headstock, bullet truss rod and three-bolt neck plate with Micro-Tilt adjustment. The pickups are a pair of Wide-Range humbuckers with Cobalt Chrome magnets, and controls consist of a three-way pickup toggle switch and individual volume and tone controls with skirted, numbered knobs. Perhaps the coolest addition is the vintage-style synchronized tremolo with block saddles. Finish options are Surf Green and Vintage White.

The '50s Jazzmaster has an alder body with either a Desert Sand or Sonic Blue finish. This model also features a maple neck with rosewood fingerboard, 7.25-inch radius, 21 vintage-tall frets and late-Fifties C-shape profile. Other period-correct features include a vintage-style floating tremolo with bridge lock, six-saddle adjustable bridge, gold anodized aluminum pickguard, a pair of vintage-style '50s single-coil Jazzmaster pickups and the idiosyncratic Jazzmaster control circuit with lead/rhythm switch, neck volume and tone thumbwheel controls (rhythm setting), master volume/master tone knobs and three-way pickup selector toggle (lead setting).

PERFORMANCE The Vintera II models are made in Mexico and showcase excellent craftsmanship. The finishes are attractive and eye-catching, and the fretwork feels smooth and silky under the fingers. These are all solidly built axes with playability on par with the finest examples from Fender's storied past. Even the misunderstood three-bolt neck plate with Micro-Tilt on the '70s Telecaster Deluxe works the way Leo Fender originally intended, thanks to the airtight neck pocket that prevents shifting. All three of our test examples emerged from the box perfectly set up, intonated and still in tune even after an arduous journey across the country in the heavy hands of shipping couriers.

The sound quality of the pickups is refined as well. Each model sounds like it is supposed to sound, with the '60s Telecaster delivering rambunctious snap and twang, the '70s Telecaster Deluxe providing aggressive bark and bite and the '50s Jazzmaster exhibiting a full tonal range from truly jazzy roundness and warmth to surf-approved shimmer and shine. If any of these models were ever on your radar, rest assured that you won't need to sift through dozens of examples to find "the one" or set aside extra bucks for replacement pickups and hardware.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICES
'50s Jazzmaster, $1,249.99;
'60s Telecaster, $1,149.99;
'70s Telecaster Deluxe with Tremolo, $1,179.99

MANUFACTURER
Fender, fender.com

- The pickups are refined and voiced to sound like prime examples of pickups from each of the model's various eras.
- The '70s Telecaster Deluxe is equipped with a Strat-style vintage synchronized tremolo with Seventies-block saddles.
- The '50s Jazzmaster offers numerous period-correct features from its gold anodized metal pickguard to its idiosyncratic lead/rhythm control circuit.
- The '60s Telecaster remains true to its classic roots, from the rosewood fingerboard to the three-saddle bridge with slotted steel saddles.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE**
When it comes to sequels, the new Fender Vintera II series is fully in *Empire Strikes Back* and *Road Warrior* territory (and thankfully not *Electric Boogaloo* mode), thanks to the models' stellar craftsmanship, tone and value as well as the incredibly cool "cult" appeal of several new models.

History Repeating

BOSS DM-101 DELAY MACHINE By Chris Gill

THERE'S A CERTAIN *je ne sais quoi* about real analog delay that every guitarist should experience and that even today's best digital models can't quite replicate. Featuring eight true analog bucket brigade chips, the Boss DM-101 Delay Machine is billed as the "ultimate analog delay pedal," and after spending a few days bathing in the glory of its lush, expressive analog textures combined with the versatility of its digital CPU control, I'm inclined to agree with Boss's assessment. Providing 12 different delay modes, up to 1,200 milliseconds of delay time, 127 presets and more, the Boss DM-101 rivals the capabilities of many digital units in its price range, but with the distinct advantage of its alluring analog sound.

FEATURES The DM-101's footprint is about the size of an iPad Mini, making it a little larger than the average stomp box. Its seven control knobs are arranged in a straight line along the top panel, making it easy to comfortably tweak the controls (which, trust me, is something you're going to enjoy doing often). The main delay controls for Delay Time, Intensity (repeats/feedback) and Delay Volume (wet/dry mix) are located on the right while the modulation section controls for Mod Rate, Mod Depth and Variation (a multi-function control that depends on which mode is selected) are on the left. In the center is a rotary switch for selecting the 12 modes. Six mono modes consist of Classic, Vintage, Modern, Multi-Head, Non-Linear and Ambience settings, while the remaining six stereo modes consist of Reflect, Doubling + Delay, Wide, Dual Mod, Pan and Pattern settings. The Memory switch above the modulation section accesses four presets or manual mode, and the Tap Division switch accesses half, quarter, eighth, triplet and dotted note divisions. Three footswitches control On/Off, Memory and Tap tempo functions.

The rear panel provides a mono ¼-inch input, two ¼-inch outputs for mono or stereo output, a ¼-inch controller jack for accessing preset memory with an optional footswitch or controlling assignable parameters with an expression pedal, 1/8-inch MIDI In and Out jacks and a micro B USB port (for loading system updates).

PERFORMANCE The DM-101's minimum and maximum delay times depend on which mode is selected, ranging from 40-1200ms in the Classic setting to 10-300ms (Vintage) and 35-190ms (Non-Linear — a reverse delay effect). The variety of effects is quite impressive, ranging from simple spanky slap backs to sophisticated textures with complex modulation and polyrhythmic qualities. Thanks to the versatile modulation section, users can dial in lush analog chorus effects as well as any variety of classic analog pedal and tape delay tones. The delay tails are thick, rich, animated and even animalistic, with a musical quality and evolving dynamics that digital technology just can't duplicate.

Although the controls lack the precision of a digital unit — there's no millisecond display or any display at all for that matter — it's refreshing to be forced to rely on one's ears when programming the unit. Since the DM-101 is truly analog, the controls function as instruments unto themselves. The way that the delays morph into feedback with the Intensity cranked and howl and growl while sweeping the Delay Time knob is a revelation of expressive beauty — dub, electronic and prog enthusiasts take note.

One vintage analog "feature" that is missing is the noise. While the delay tails can certainly deliver the grit, grunge and dark depths that analog enthusiasts adore, the constant hiss and sizzle of yesteryear's less-than-stellar noise specs is non-existent. This is the most pure and pristine example of analog delay that this reviewer has ever experienced, and it is worth the price of admission alone. Add in the unit's outstanding versatility and wide range of effects from classic to adventurous, and the DM-101 lives up to its "ultimate analog" billing.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $449.99
MANUFACTURER: Boss, boss.info

- The rotary delay mode switch provides six mono and six stereo settings that include classic stomp box and tape echo effects to sophisticated modern textures.
- The Variation knob performs different functions like adjusting modulation waveforms, selecting head patterns or stereo time differences, depending on which mode is selected.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE**
  The DM-101's true analog delay effects are in a class of their own when it comes to expressiveness and musicality, further enhanced by the power and versatility of its CPU-controlled design.

Unfolding Into View

CIARI GUITARS ASCENDER STANDARD

By Paul Riario

THE SAD FATE of a travel guitar is it can never be more than just that — an occasional travel companion that gets played out of sight in a hotel room or lazily strummed on a beach. Such clichéd views have often made it seem frivolous to own one since it'll be less likely that you'll ever use it except when on vacation. But that notion will dramatically change once you unfold the Ciari Guitars Ascender Standard — a full-sized professional electric guitar with pioneering foldable tech that neatly folds the guitar in half, allowing it to be easily stowed in an overhead bin or tucked under an airline seat when you travel. Best of all, there's nothing gimmicky about it, because it's not your run-of-the-mill travel guitar. The Ascender Standard is a precision state-of-the-art instrument that can double as a travel guitar — or as your main guitar — and is equally suitable to be wielded onstage or in the studio with its full-scale design, premium components and desirable asymmetrical looks.

FEATURES The Ascender Standard is without peer as a travel guitar. Whereas other travel guitars tend to look awkward or unconventional (to accommodate their compact dimensions for travel), the Ascender Standard is, by all appearances, a standard-sized electric guitar with a 24 and ¾-inch scale length just like a Gibson, and to be fair, I feel it's better to consider it more as a conventional guitar (with the ability to fold in half). It has many traditional features, such as a nano-satin basswood body in a black matte finish, a 3-ply black pickguard, a mahogany neck with a natural-neck finish and an ebony fingerboard (planed and fret-leveled by Plek-machining), 22 medium jumbo nickel frets, a small 3+3 headstock with Ciari locking tuners, Tune-o-Matic roller bridge, the classic combo of two Seymour Duncan '59 humbuckers, a master volume and tone and a three-way pick-up selector.

The guitar incorporates a novel and patented foldable system accessed from the back of its body that looks far more intricate and intimidating than the actual act of unfolding or folding the guitar. This folding mechanism includes an aircraft-grade aluminum alloy mid-neck hinge, a translating locking strut to selectively enable or disable the hinge and a floating tailpiece, all of which work collectively to fold the guitar down to a travel-ready 18 ½-inch length and 12 ½-inch width. Pulling the concealed actuator lever underneath the body toward the center strap pin starts the process of folding the guitar by gently releasing the neck backward and dropping the string tension (from 118 lbs. to 3 lbs). From there, the strings slacken into the guitar's six "protective" V-shaped grooves at the 12th and 14th frets, allowing them to safely follow the fold and stay in place by a plastic guide bar behind the nut as the neck splits in two at those respective frets. Conversely, holding the neck and slowly raising it up from the back of the guitar while keeping the strings in place and pulling the actuator lever toward the neck plate will lock the neck in place and fully restore proper string tension. Adding to its top-notch provenance, the Ascender was designed in cooperation with acclaimed luthier Joe Glaser and is manufactured in Ciari Guitars' Nashville shop.

PERFORMANCE The Ascender Standard arrives completely folded inside a compact and durably quilted Ciari gig bag (there's also a Ciari backpack sold separately that can house that gig bag along with extra pockets for accessories and room for even a laptop). Once you unzip the gig bag, it's astonishing to see this folded heap of metal and wood — which looks like it's been put through a car crusher — unfold into a fully fledged pro-level instrument. Nothing about the process of folding or unfolding the guitar compromises its structural stability or the integrity of its setup and swift playability. It all neatly locks into place in seconds in an uncannily accurate and stable manner. Even more surprising, the Ascender Standard has been so precisely engineered that once unfolded, the guitar is miraculously close to being in tune — if not in tune. And since this guitar has been built to exacting standards, and with Plek tech, it almost seems unnecessary to tell you that it plays smoothly and without any fret buzz; plus, the versatile Duncan '59 humbuckers sound articulate and harmonically rich for any style of music. The only drawback I foresee is that your musician friends might ask you to show them how it folds — repeatedly.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $1,799
MANUFACTURER:
Ciari Guitars, ciariguitars.com

- The guitar features a patented folding mechanism that precisely folds the guitar in half symmetrically to a folded length of 18.5 inches and meets airline qualifications as a personal item.
- When folded, the guitar's accurate string management system keeps the strings in place and under light tension, and when unfolded, restores the strings safely to proper tension and is ready to play.
- The Ascender Standard comes in a standard-sized 24 and ¾-inch scale length and is loaded with a pair of Seymour Duncan '59 humbuckers.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE**
With folding technology that's precisely engineered, the foldable Ciari Guitars Ascender Standard is a professional guitar that's ideal for traveling guitarists.

Buzz Bin
Mod Electronics Phase/Off

MY FASCINATION WITH building things ended a long time ago when I played with Legos. Since then, I've become more of a prima donna when it comes to assembling anything, but I still know many musicians who love tinkering with and building gear. So, for my brethren who fall under the latter category, Mod Electronics has provided them with the satisfaction of building their own pedals and amplifiers with DIY component kits that come with detailed, step-by-step instructions. From what I've gathered, as long as you have patience, a steady hand and decent soldering skills, you can tackle any of these kits. Now, while I didn't take part in building the Mod Electronics Phase/Off pedal that was sent for review, I'm going to use this space to relay how incredible it sounds. And frankly, if I ever find my way around a soldering iron, I just might build one myself. That's just how remarkable this Phase/Off stompbox is.

According to Mod Electronics, the Phase/Off "is a four-stage phaser based around the Sound Semiconductor SSI2140 voltage-controlled multi-mode filter." For neophytes not familiar with what that means, the legendary Prophet-5 Rev's 1 and 2 polyphonic analog synths used "SSM" filter chips to achieve their acclaimed idiosyncratic sounds. The new SSI2140 filter chip is an improved update of the original SSM chips used in those vintage synths, and is now being employed in the Phase/Off and configured as an allpass filter to contribute to its distinct phase shifting. The Phase/Off features knobs for Depth, Rate and Regen to go anywhere from subtle to intense modulations of its triangle LFO phasing. In addition, a "Stages" mini-switch toggles between four-stage or two-stage phasing, while the "Mode" mini-switch can be set to LFO (for classic phasing) or to Manual (disabling the LFO in a fixed phase mode controlled by the Depth knob for alternative filtering effects). Lastly, the pedal comes in a heavy-duty aluminum housing (that can be custom-painted), is true-bypass and operates on 9VDC with no battery connection.

Call it unconscious bias toward an off-brand stompbox, but I didn't expect the Phase/Off to sound so musical in its smooth phasing. I've been quite fond of my Phase 90 and Mu-Tron Phasor variants, but the Phase/Off took me by surprise by unintentionally being able to combine the sonic characteristics of both of those classic phasers into one unit. Set to four-stage phasing and with all three knobs set in-and-around noon, the Phase/Off nails the ramped-up swoosh of a script-era Phase 90, but can also drizzle in a drippy funked-up swirl that sounds so infectious with clean guitar. Pushing the controls to their outer limits delivers thick and chewy extremes of swoosh reminiscent of a Mu-Tron Phasor. Hell, if you dial the knobs a particular way, you can almost ape the ringing pulse of a Uni-Vibe with a dollop of phase. You can't go wrong either way, but I'll point out that its two-stage setting offers warmth and softness to its swirl, whereas, I believe, players are more likely to hang with the richly detailed and lush four-stage phasing. I mentioned earlier that there's a synth chip at play here, and what's so cool is you can hear a hint of that filtering when you dial in settings for throbbing vibrato, vocal-like "Wow" sounds, synth stabs and psychedelic rise-and-fall swoosh. It's all so sweetly packed into this pedal that I'd say it's worth the time and sweat for the build.
— Paul Riario

STREET PRICE: $79.95
MANUFACTURER: Mod Electronics, modelectronics.com

IN DEEP

by Andy Aledort

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/holiday2023

BOOGIE ON

How to play "Sam's Boogie," redux, part 2

LAST MONTH, WE initiated a deeper dive into Magic Sam's guitar *tour de force*, the live version of his classic blues instrumental "Lookin' Good," also known as "Sam's Boogie." The elusive techniques Sam uses to play this tune have eluded many players for years. While I was touring with Dickey Betts a few years back, one day he asked me to teach him how to play "Sam's Boogie." I didn't know how! So I set about learning it, and it was quite a challenge. Once I had a handle on it, Dickey and I got together and would work on all the intricacies involved in trying to recreate the variety of techniques Magic Sam employs on this classic track.

FIGURE 1 picks up from 0:29 into the recording, where Sam initiates repeating finger slides up the top two strings, landing on an E note on the B string's 5th fret G at the 3rd fret on the high E string. Sounded together with the open A string, the result is the sound of an A7no3 chord. It's tricky to repeatedly slide up to each two-note dyad this quickly, so try doing it slowly at first.

After performing this sliding figure three times, we move to the IV (four) chord, D7, shown in **FIGURE 2**. Sam throws in "random" open-string accents between the chords, akin to **FIGURE 3**.

This is followed by **FIGURE 4**, in which D7 is sounded with the open D string in conjunction with the notes F♯ (B string, 7th fret) and C (high E string, 8th fret). The C is pulled-off to A at the 5th fret, after which B (7th fret) alternates against the A and C notes, momentarily impling a D6 sound.

As shown in **FIGURE 5**, an additional bass-like riff is added on beat 4 of each bar as the phrase repeats. Following the alternating D7 and D6 chords, the open A string is sounded, then a hammer-on up to C at the 3rd fret and then the open D string.

Sam then restates the more basic rhythm part that preceded the sliding dyads figure. **FIGURE 6** shows switching back and forth between A7 and A on every other beat, with low G bass notes added between the chords.

At 0:51, Sam switches to repeating octave figures, fretted on the A and G strings. **FIGURE 7** approximates this part. This is followed by **FIGURE 8**, which is similar to **FIGURE 6** but instead simply sticks with the A7 chord voicing.

Swing 16ths (♫ = ♫)

FIG. 1 A7no3

fingerstyle

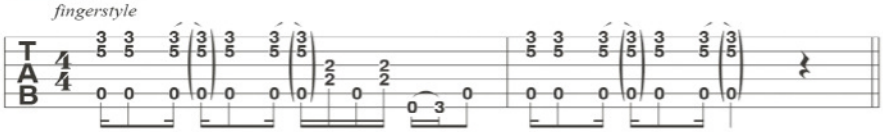


FIG. 2 A7 D(7)

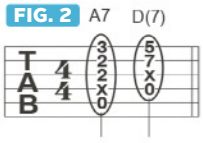


FIG. 3 A7 D(7) A7 D(7)

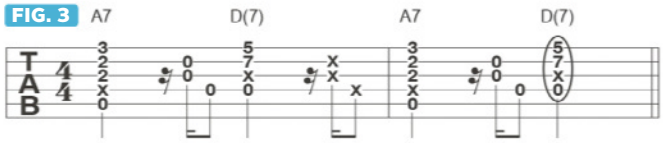


FIG. 4 D7 D6 D D7 D

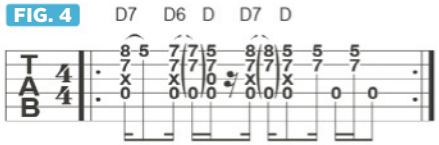


FIG. 5 D7 D6 D D7 D (play 3 times)

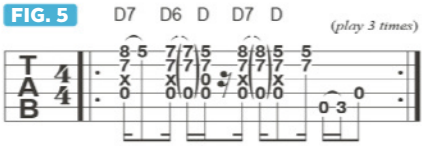


FIG. 6 A7

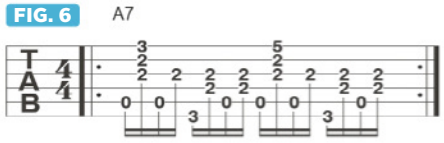


FIG. 7 (C)

(D) (C) (A)

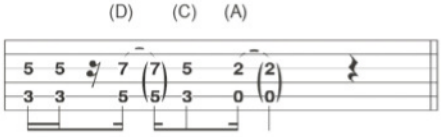


FIG. 8 A7

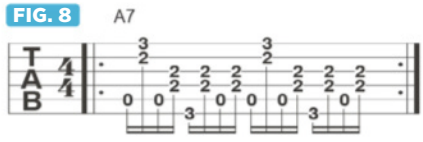
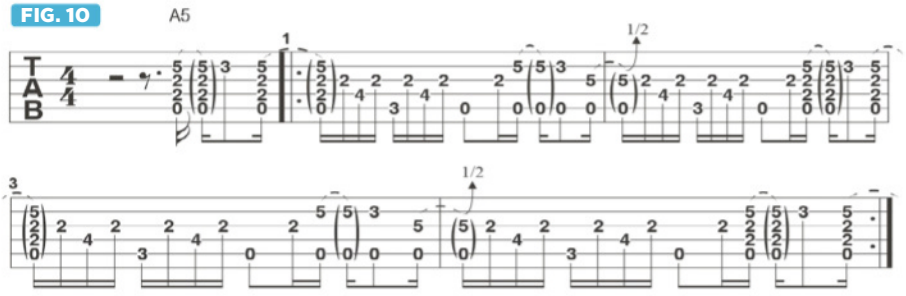


FIG. 9 (A6)

FIG. 10 A5



At 1:03, Sam cues the band to come back in, at which point he reverts to the song's primary figure. When playing this part, one can alternate the low C on beat 2 for a low G instead. As shown in **FIGURE 9**, the low G then replaces the C.

As if this weren't enough, Sam works in a nod to Slim Harpo's "Shake Your Hips," as approximated in **FIGURE 10**. After a return to the primary lick (**FIGURE 9**), Sam brings this masterpiece to a close. Have fun with it! It's a challenge, but well worth the effort.

***GW* associate editor Andy Aledort's latest album, *Light of Love*, is available now.**

ALISON HASBACH

TALES FROM NERDVILLE

by Joe Bonamassa

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/holiday2023

TOOLS OF THE TRADE, PART 9

The 1964 Gibson Firebird V

TODAY'S FEATURED AX is a 1964 Firebird V. For those unfamiliar, Gibson made four different versions of the Firebird in the mid-Sixties. A Firebird I, played famously by Eric Clapton for a spell during his days in Cream, has dot inlays and only one pickup; a Firebird III has dot inlays and two pickups; a Firebird V, like this one, has trapezoid inlays and two pickups; and a Firebird VII has block inlays, an ebony fretboard and three pickups, with all gold hardware. Back then, the decision as to which guitar was best for you came down to what you wanted to spend; the Firebird I was the least expensive and the Firebird VII was the top of the line.

I like Firebird V's the best, simply because this is the model that Johnny Winter played. My youth encapsulated in a guitar is a Firebird V, because Johnny was such a huge hero and inspiration to me, from when I first heard him when I was 11 years old.

My very first Firebird was a "medallion" Firebird, which was a reissue of a 1964 Firebird V, first made available in 1972. In those days, all I wanted to do was to play like Johnny! He would use the neck pickup only, and was just ripping blues-rock riffs all day long! To me, that was the epitome of blues-rock guitar — a Firebird V into a cranked Fender amp. Johnny was always on fire back then, singing and playing brilliantly on some of the greatest blues-rock songs ever.

Because of the construction of the guitars — a mahogany neck-thru-body design with mahogany "wings" on the sides, plus the mini humbuckers — Firebirds have a very distinct sound and are a bit brighter than other Gibson solidbody guitars.

FIGURE 1 is a six-bar phrase based on the G minor pentatonic scale (G, B♭, C, D, F) and the G blues scale (G, B♭, C, D♭, D, F). These phrases are intended as nods to Johnny's phrasing style — with an emphasis on fast 16th-note triplet pull-offs and fast, aggressive vibratos. Firebird V's produce a throaty sound that is absolutely unique and immediately recognizable. **FIGURE 2** offers another "Johnny approved" phrase, as G minor pentatonic is played up high in 15th position; you gotta get the vibrato right!

As I mentioned, Johnny never touched his toggle switch and always stayed on the neck pickup, but every toggle switch position on this instrument can yield fantastic results. **FIGURE 3** offers a phrase played with both pickups engaged. Bar 1 features a G minor pentatonic lick, after which I switch to phrases based on D minor pentatonic (D, F, G, A, C).

In **FIGURE 4**, I've switched to the bridge pickup only, which is full treble and as bright as it gets. These lines are based on the G blues scale. Utilizing the bridge pickup, the sound is very aggressive and just might rip your ears and your eyelids off! Rolling back the tone control a bit tempers the bite.

FIG. 1 neck pickup

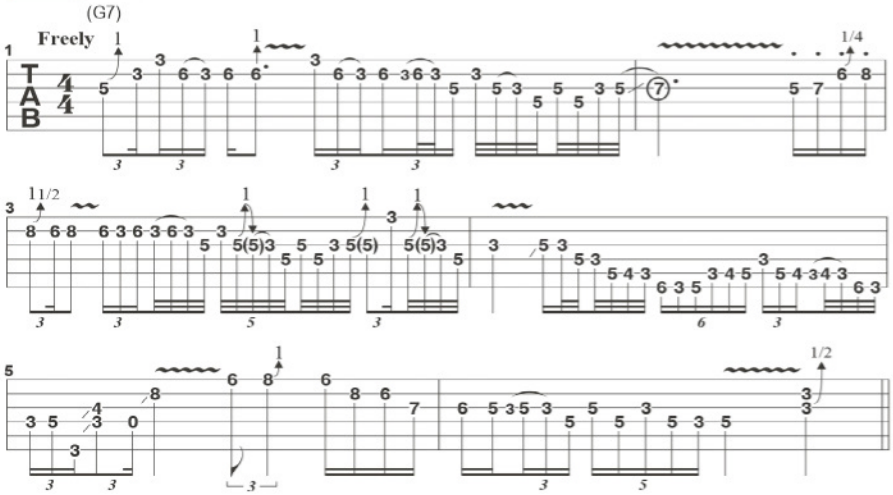


FIG. 2

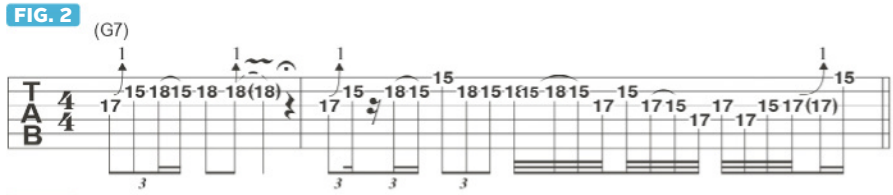


FIG. 3 middle position

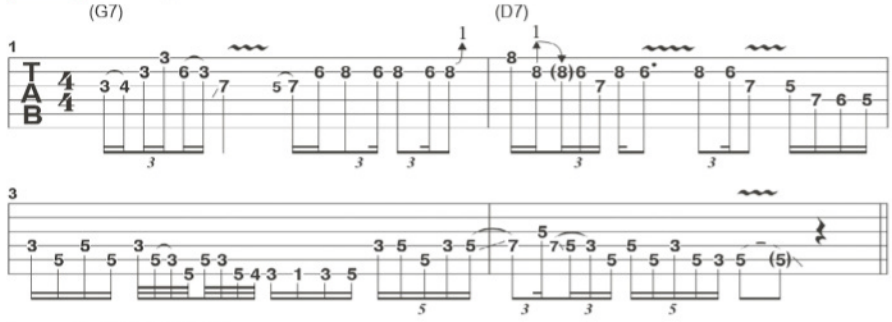
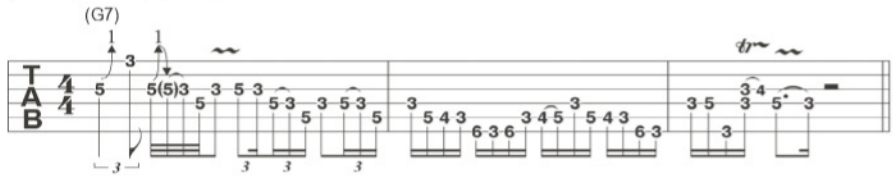


FIG. 4 bridge pickup



Joe Bonamassa is one of the world's most popular blues-rock guitarists — not to mention a top producer and *de facto* ambassador of the blues.

JEFF FASANO

MELODIC MUSE

by Andy Timmons

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/holiday2023

THE BIG CHORUS

How to play "Winterland," part 3

OVER THE LAST two columns, I detailed the intro and verse sections my song "Winterland," which I had recorded with the Andy Timmons Band for our 2016 album, *Theme from a Perfect World*. We also looked at the "channel" section that sets up the tune's powerful chorus, which I'll now detail how I play.

FIGURE 1 illustrates the chorus, which is 20 bars long. Throughout this section, I utilize low bass notes, often sounded on open strings, to both fatten up the sound of the guitar part and offer a fuller picture of the harmony as it unfolds. In bars 1 and 2 and the preceding pickup bar, I sound the tonic, or root note, via the open D string. When I move to the V (five) chord, A, in bar 3, I use the open A string in a similar way. Bars 5 and 6 are played over Bm, so I opted to play a full B5 chord on beat 1 of bar 5. Bars 7 and 8 are played over G, which is just briefly referenced via the notes D and B that fall on the first two beats in bar 7.

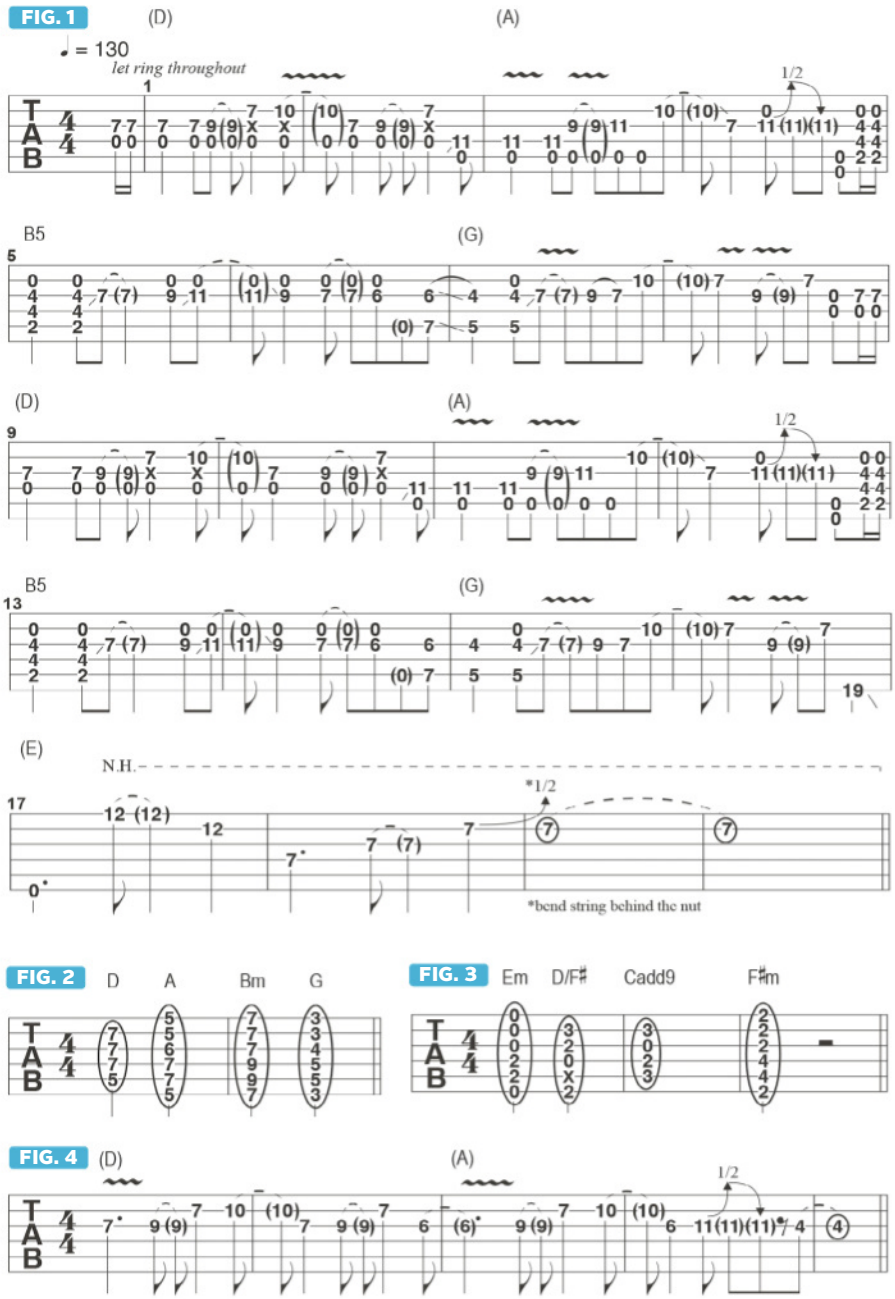
Of primary importance throughout this section is the statement of the melody, so these chordal elements are added simply to create a grander sonic picture. But while playing through this section, my main focus is to deliver the melody with as much power and emotion as possible.

At bar 17, the implied tonal center shifts to E minor, or E5, as the 3rd of the chord, G, is not clearly defined. Following the ringing open low E note, I sound two natural harmonics (N.H.) at the 12th fret on the top two strings, followed by three natural harmonics at the 7th fret on the D, G and B strings. While the F♯ harmonic on the B string is ringing, I push down on the string behind the nut to raise its pitch a half step, to G.

Let's review the harmony that makes up this chorus section. As shown in **FIGURE 1**, we're solidly in the key of D major and begin by moving from the tonic, D, to the 5th, A, then to the vi (six minor) chord, Bm, and the (IV) four chord, G. When I hit the open low E note and the harmonics, this implies the Em - D/F♯ - Cadd9 progression shown in **FIGURE 3**, which is followed by a return to F♯m for the next verse.

It's always good to focus on the single-string melody itself, and this is shown in **FIGURE 4**. The melody is simple and is based on the D major scale (D, E, F♯, G, A, B, C♯). While playing it, I'm focused on the open sound of the guitar-bass-drums "power trio" setting, and I find that a great way to support the melody is with the inclusion of the previously mentioned low bass notes depicted in **FIGURE 1**.

My goal is always for a song to have a great melody. That said, the guitar itself has so much potential to bring in all of these different elements and sounds that will lift a song to great heights. This is why we love the guitar — the opportunity is always there to create powerful and unexpected sounds that will bring us to new places.



Andy Timmons is a world-renowned guitarist known for his work with the Andy Timmons Band, Danger Danger and Simon Phillips. His latest album, *Electric Truth*, is out now.

SIMONE CECHETTI

LIVE FROM FLAT V

by Josh Smith

For video of this lesson, go to guitarworld.com/holiday2023

ALL ANGLES, PART 2

More on combining chromaticism, diminished patterns and ii - V - I's

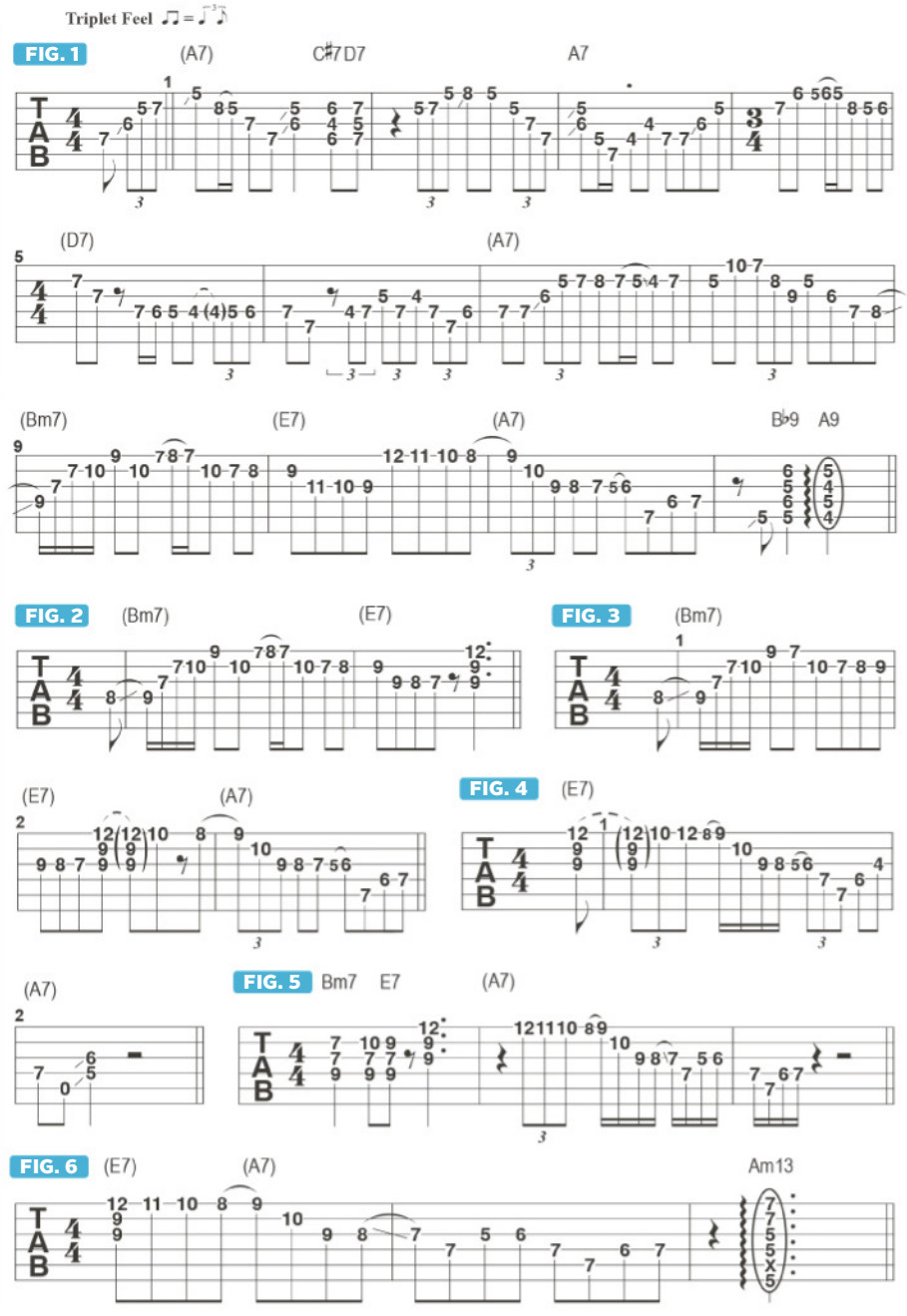
AS WE HAVE been discussing over the past several columns, a great way to add melodic and harmonic variety to a guitar solo over a blues progression is by incorporating the use of such devices as chromaticism, diminished chords and ii - V - I turnarounds. Each approach has the potential to yield musically surprising results and can carry the listener — and the player — to unexpected places. As I pointed out last month, the truly effective incorporation of these devices only works well when they don't sound obvious or contrived. And the only way to get to that place is to study and assimilate all of these things to the point where they become second nature to you and can serve as available options at any given moment.

Last month, I kicked off the column with an improvised solo played over a 12-bar blues form in the key of A, incorporating all three of these musical devices as the solo unfolded. Our dissection of the solo took us through to bar 8, where the progression reaches the V (five) chord, E7, so we'll now pick up our analysis of the solo from that point.

FIGURE 1 shows the 12-bar solo in its entirety, and a quick review will show that I bring in chromaticism to set up the shift to the IV (four) chord, D7, in bar 5. Additionally, the inclusion of the notes B♭, C♯, E and G make reference to a B♭ diminished 7 chord.

After the return to A7 in bar 7, in bar 8 I bring in an Em7 arpeggio via the descending notes D, B, G and E, followed by reference back to the one chord, A7, with the notes E, C♯ and A. The A note then affords me the opportunity to superimpose a ii - V (two minor to five major) of Bm - E7, by sliding up chromatically from A to B♭.

As shown in **FIGURE 2**, the B♭ then slides up to B, setting up a Bm9 arpeggio via the notes B, D, F♯, A and C♯. at the end of bar 1, I ascend chromatically from F♯ to G to G♯, targeting the five chord, E7. **FIGURE 3** offers another incarnation of how to move from Bm9 to E and E7 with chromaticism, which then delivers us back to the one chord, A7, in bar 3.



There are so many different ways to work back from the five chord, E7, to the one, A7. **FIGURE 4** presents another twist, as the lines move from E7 on beat 1 to A7 on beats 2 and 3, then back to E7 on beat 4, setting up the return to A7 in the next bar.

FIGURES 5 and **6** offer two more examples of how to work your way back down from the five, E7, to the one, A7, with **FIGURE 5** including more complex rhythmic syncopation and **FIGURE 6** simply sticking with swinging eighth notes. You can't go wrong if the lines swing, so keep that in mind as you improvise your own solos.

Josh Smith is a highly respected blues-country-jazz master and all-around tone wizard. His new album, 2022's *Bird of Passage*, is out now.

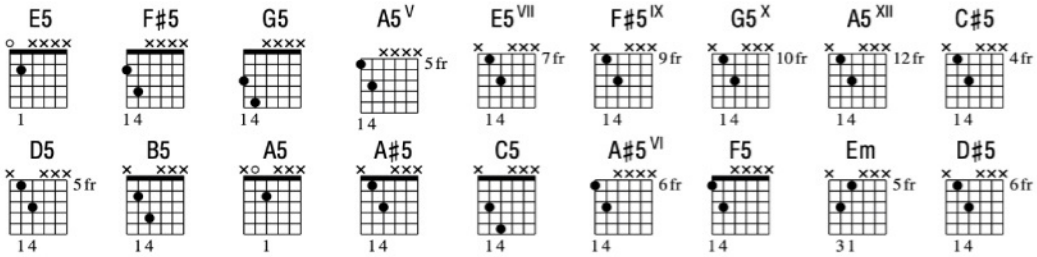
OLLY CURTIS/FUTURE

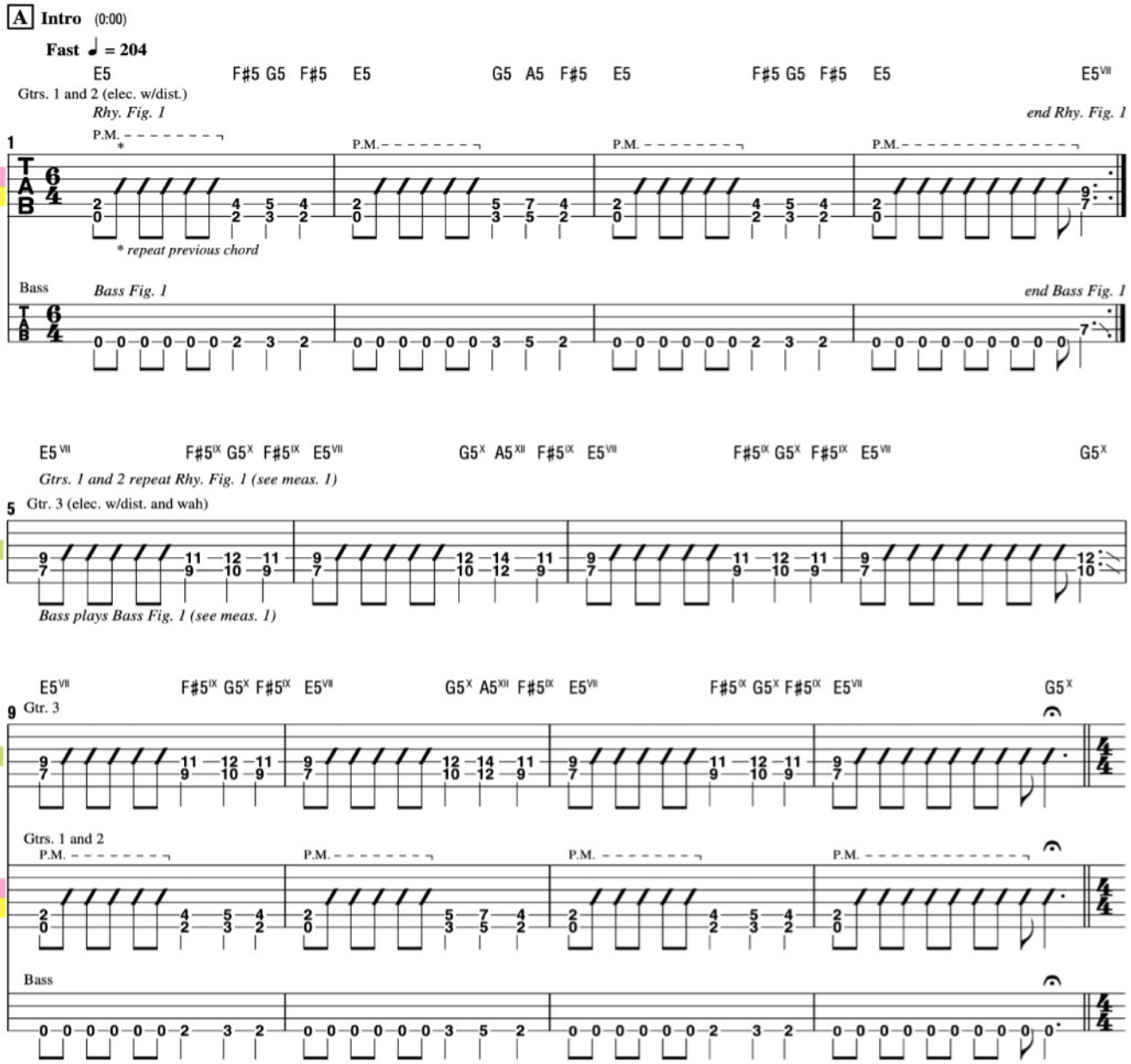
"DISPOSABLE HEROES"

Metallica

As heard on **MASTER OF PUPPETS**

Words and Music by JAMES HETFIELD, LARS ULRICH *and* KIRK HAMMETT • *Transcribed by* JEFF PERRIN





"DISPOSABLE HEROES"
WORDS AND MUSIC BY JAMES HETFIELD, LARS ULRICH AND KIRK HAMMETT.
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B (0:32)

Slower ♩ = 180

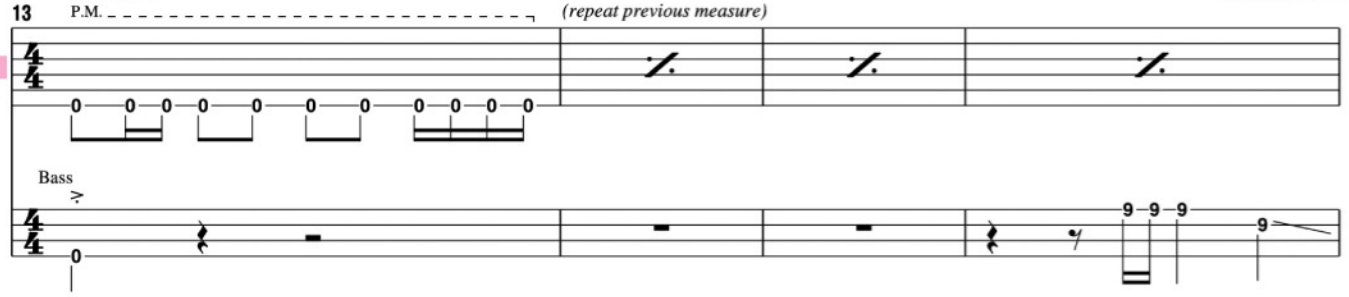
N.C.(E5)

Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fig. 2

end Rhy. Fig. 2

13 P.M. *(repeat previous measure)*



Bass

w/half-time feel

Gtr. 1 repeats Rhy. Fig. 2 (see meas. 13)

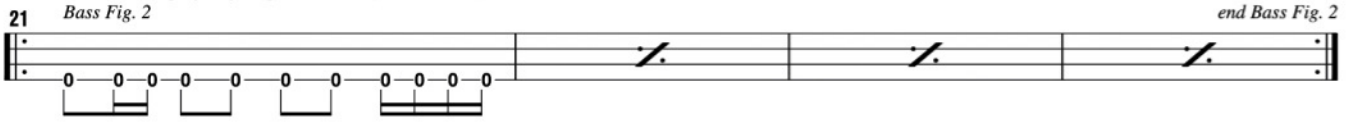
17 Bass

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 six times (see meas. 13)

Bass Fig. 2

end Bass Fig. 2

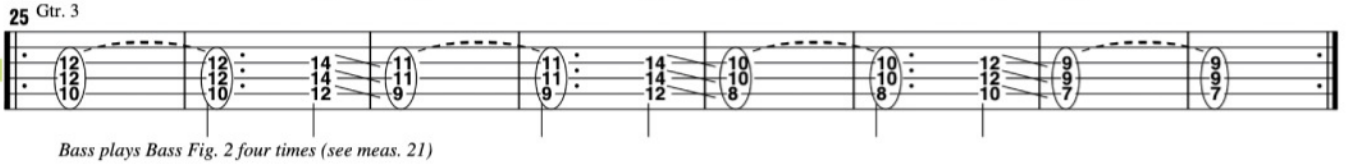
21



(0:54)

G5 X A5 XII F♯5 IX A5 XII F5 VIII G5 X E5 VII

25 Gtr. 3



Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see meas. 21)

C (1:15, 5:49)

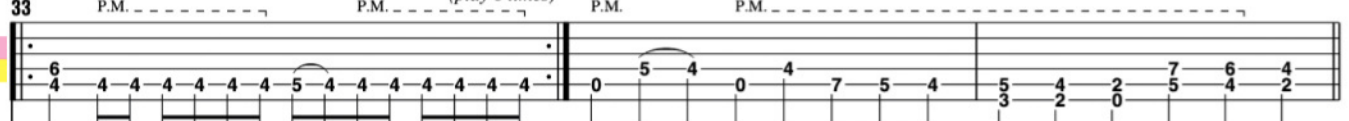
w/double-time feel

(2nd time) skip ahead to **E** *Verse*

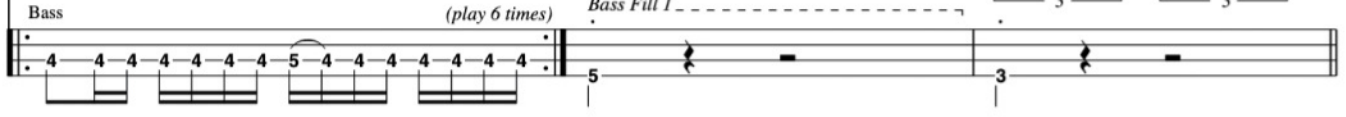
C♯5 N.C.(A7) G5 F♯5 E5 D5 C♯5 B5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

33 P.M. P.M. *(play 6 times)* P.M. P.M.



Bass *(play 6 times)* *Bass Fill 1*



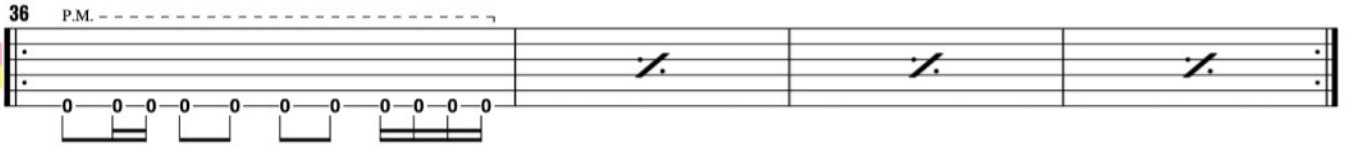
D (1:26)

(end double-time feel)

N.C.(E5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

36 P.M.



Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 twice (see meas. 21)

E **Verses** (1:37, 2:51, 6:00)

1. Bodies fill the fields I see Hungry heroes end
2. Barking of machine-gun fire does nothing to me now
3. Life planned out before my birth Nothing could I say

N.C.(E5) (G5) (F♯5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

40 P.M.

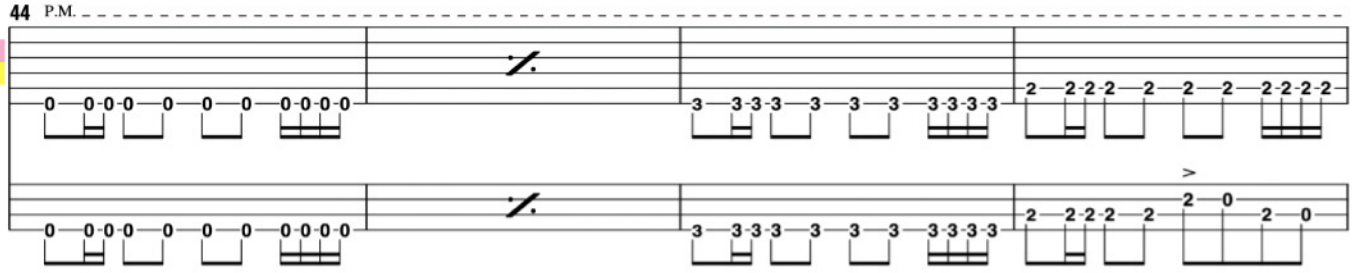
Bass

Bass Fig. 3 *end Bass Fig. 3*

No one to play soldier now No one to pretend
Sounding of the clock that ticks get used to it somehow
Had no chance to see myself molded day by day

(E5) (G5) (B5)

44 P.M.

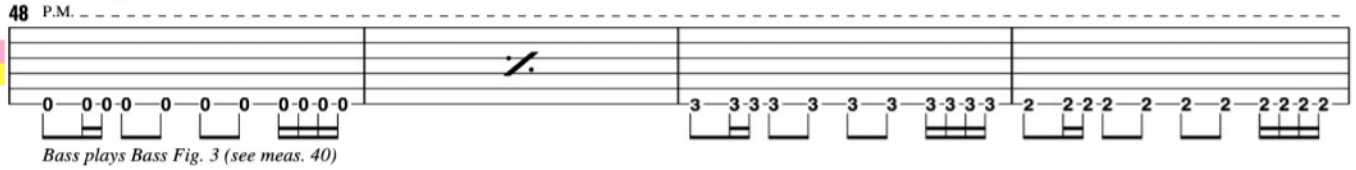


Running blind through killing fields bred to kill them all
More a man more stripes you wear Glory seeker treads
Looking back I realize nothing have I done

(E5) (G5) (F♯5)

Gtrs. 1 and 2

48 P.M.

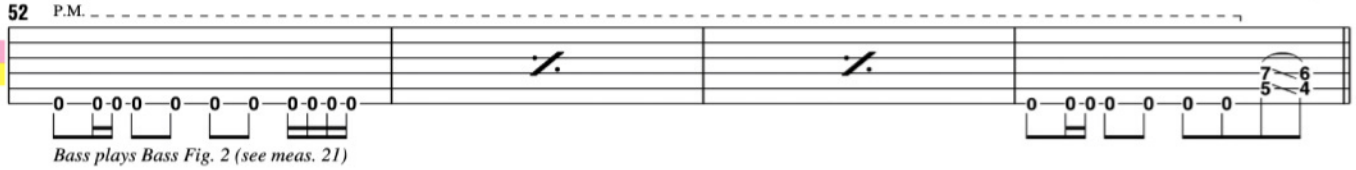


Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 (see meas. 40)

Victim of what said should be a servant 'til I fall
Bodies fill the fields I see the slaughter never ends
Left to die with only friend Alone I clench my gun

(E5) D5 C♯5

52 P.M.



Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see meas. 21)

F **Pre-chorus** (1:58, 3:12, 6:22)

w/double-time feel

(1.) Soldier boy made of clay now an empty shell
(2.) Twenty - one only son but he served us well
(3.) Bred to kill not to care Do just as we say
(4.) Finished here greeting death He's yours to take away

C♯5 B5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 (play 4 times)

56 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

Bass (play 4 times)

G (2:17, 3:31, 6:41) (3rd time) skip ahead to **M**

B5 A5

Bass overdub (w/dist. and reverb)

59

Gtrs. 1 and 2

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

*note in parenthesis is played first time only

Bass

H **1st and 2nd Choruses** (2:28, 3:42)

(end double-time feel)

(2.) Back to the front You will do
(3.) Back to the front You will die
(4.) Back to the front You coward

B5 A♯5 B5 C5 B5 N.C.(E5) G5 A♯5 VI F♯5

Gtrs. 1 and 2

62 P.M. *Rhy. Fig. 3*

Bass *Bass Fig. 4*

(1st time) go back to **E** *Verse*

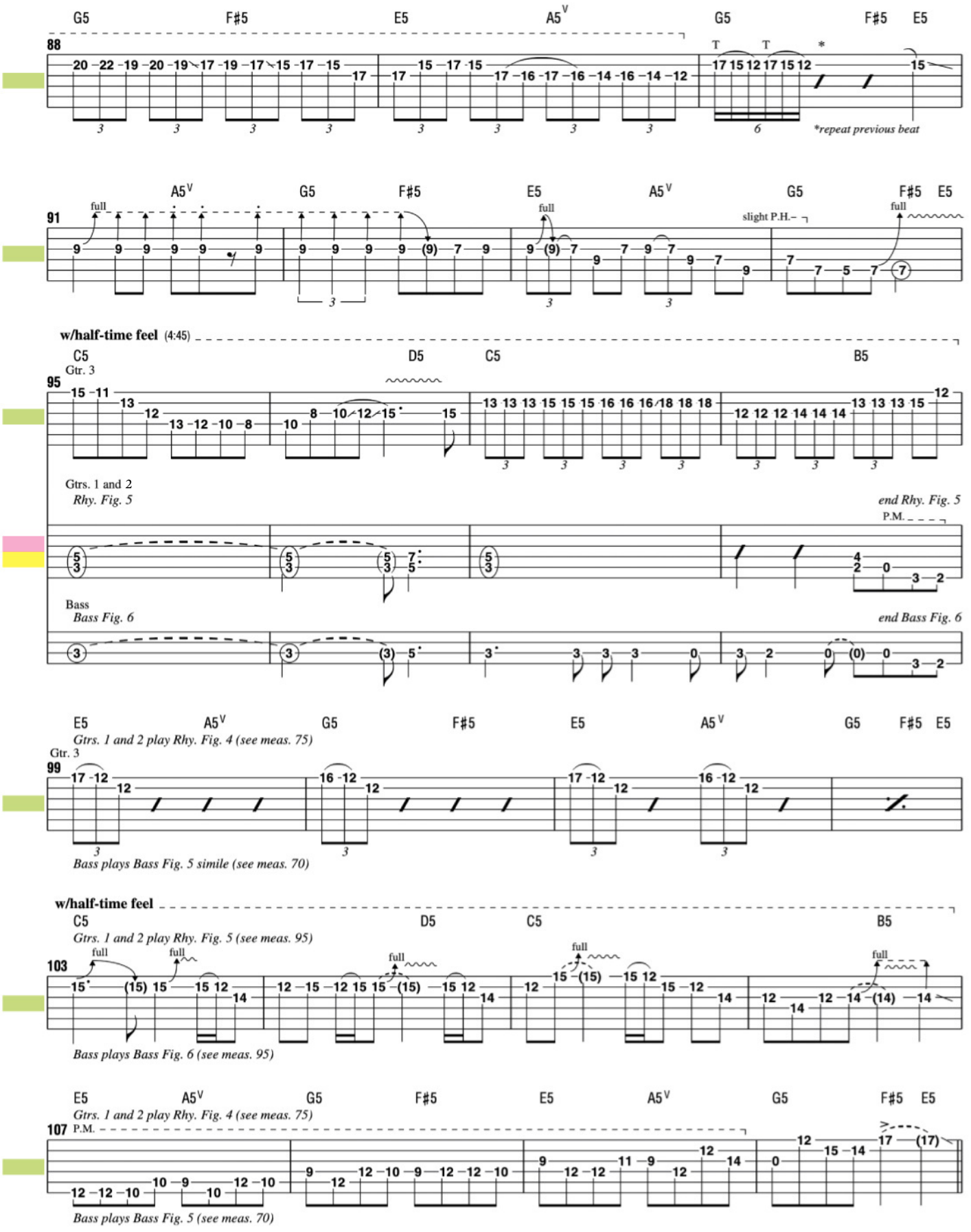
what I say when I say you servant when I say you must die you blind man

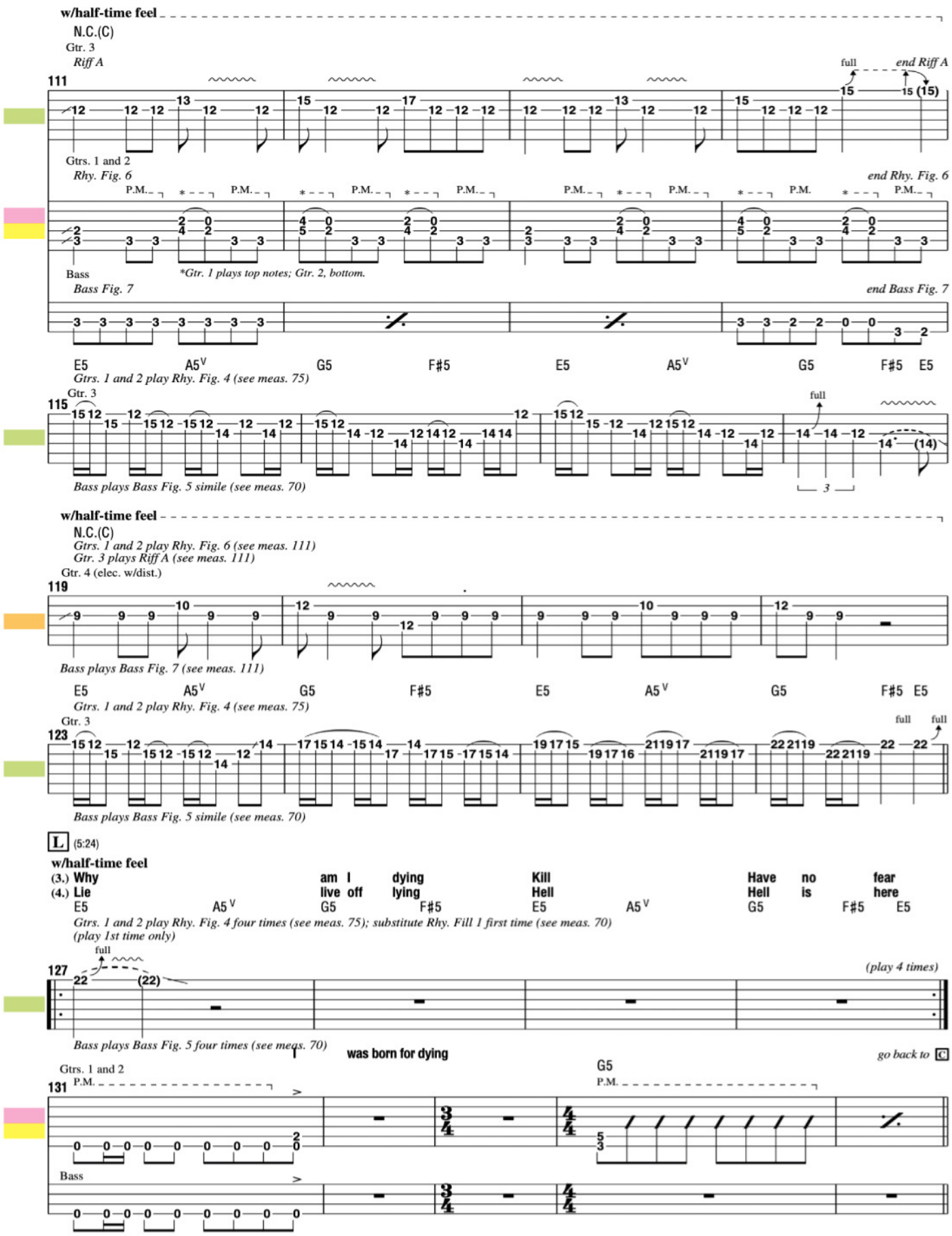
A5 V F5 (play 4 times) end Rhy. Fig. 3 N.C.(E5) E5

65 P.M.

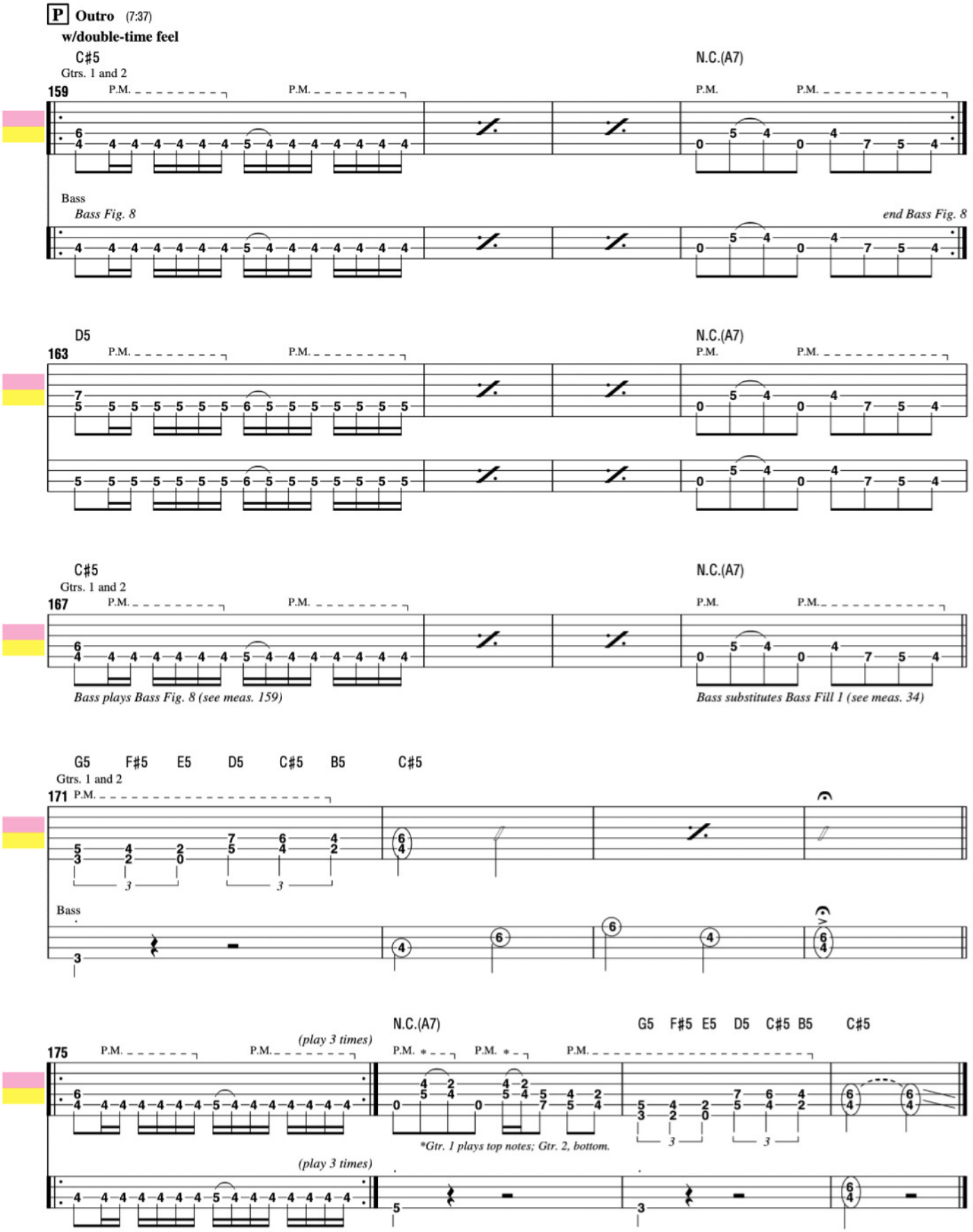
(play 4 times) end Bass Fig. 4

I (4:04)
w/half-time feel
Em
A5
G5
F#5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 substitute Rhy. Fill 2 second time (see meas. 72)
Rhy. Fill 1
69
P.M.
Bass Fig. 5
*omit tie on repeats
1.
2.
E5
A5
G5
F#5
E5
Rhy. Fill 2
72
end Bass Fig. 5
J Bridge (4:16)
(1.) Why am I dying Kill have no fear
(2.) Lie live off lying Hell Hell is here
Gtrs. 1 and 2
Rhy. Fig. 4
75
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 twice simile (see meas. 70)
K Guitar Solo (4:26)
(end half-time feel)
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 4 four times (see meas. 75)
Gtr. 3
79
full
let ring
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 four times simile (see meas. 70)
82
85
1/2
1½
w/delay


G5 F#5 E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5
88
T T *
*repeat previous beat
A5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5
91
full
slight P.H.
w/half-time feel (4:45)
C5 D5 C5 B5
Gtr. 3
95
Gtrs. 1 and 2
Rhy. Fig. 5
end Rhy. Fig. 5
P.M.
Bass
Bass Fig. 6
end Bass Fig. 6
E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 4 (see meas. 75)
Gtr. 3
99
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 simile (see meas. 70)
w/half-time feel
C5 D5 C5 B5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 5 (see meas. 95)
103
full
Bass plays Bass Fig. 6 (see meas. 95)
E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 4 (see meas. 75)
107
P.M.
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 (see meas. 70)


w/half-time feel
N.C.(C)
Gtr. 3
Riff A
111
full
end Riff A
Gtrs. 1 and 2
Rhy. Fig. 6
end Rhy. Fig. 6
P.M.
Bass
*Gtr. 1 plays top notes; Gtr. 2, bottom.
Bass Fig. 7
end Bass Fig. 7
E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 4 (see meas. 75)
Gtr. 3
115
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 simile (see meas. 70)
w/half-time feel
N.C.(C)
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 6 (see meas. 111)
Gtr. 3 plays Riff A (see meas. 111)
Gtr. 4 (elec. w/dist.)
119
Bass plays Bass Fig. 7 (see meas. 111)
E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 4 (see meas. 75)
Gtr. 3
123
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 simile (see meas. 70)
L (5:24)
w/half-time feel
(3.) Why am I dying Kill Have no fear
(4.) Lie live off lying Hell Hell is here
E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5 A5 G5 F#5 E5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 4 four times (see meas. 75); substitute Rhy. Fill 1 first time (see meas. 70)
(play 1st time only)
127
(play 4 times)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 5 four times (see meas. 70)
I was born for dying
go back to C
Gtrs. 1 and 2
131
Bass

M (6:51)
N 3rd Chorus (6:54)
(end half-time feel)
B5 A♯5 B5 C5 B5
C5 B5 C5 D5 D♯5 E5VII
G5
A♯5VI F♯5
A5V F5
G5
Gtrs. 1 and 2
136
P.M.
Bass
(1.) Back to the front
(2.) Back to the front
(3.) Back to the front
You will do
You will die
You coward
what I say
when I say
you servant
when I say
you must die
you blind man
N.C.(E5)
G5
A♯5VI F♯5
A5
F5
G5
142
(play 3 times)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 three times (see meas. 63)
O (7:15)
Back to the front
N.C.(E5)
G5
A♯5VI F♯5
A5V F5
G5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 3 four times (see meas. 63)
Gtr. 3
full
146
Bass overdub (w/dist.)
Riff B
end Riff B
Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 three times (see meas. 63)
*Notes played on repeat only.
Back to the front
N.C.(E5)
G5
A♯5VI F♯5
A5V F5
G5
Bass overdub plays Riff B twice (see meas. 146)
Gtr. 4
150
Back to the front
N.C.(E5)
G5
A♯5VI F♯5
A5V F5
G5
Back to the front
N.C.(E5)
Gtr. 3
154
Gtr. 4
P.M.
Gtrs. 1 and 2
Bass


P Outro (7:37)
w/double-time feel
C♯5
Gtrs. 1 and 2
159
P.M.
N.C.(A7)
Bass
Bass Fig. 8
end Bass Fig. 8
D5
163
C♯5
Gtrs. 1 and 2
167
Bass plays Bass Fig. 8 (see meas. 159)
Bass substitutes Bass Fill 1 (see meas. 34)
G5 F♯5 E5 D5 C♯5 B5 C♯5
171
175
(play 3 times)
*Gtr. 1 plays top notes; Gtr. 2, bottom.

Performance Notes

HOW TO PLAY THIS MONTH'S SONGS **By Jimmy Brown**

"DISPOSABLE HEROES"
Metallica

THIS EIGHT-MINUTE epic from Metallica's classic 1986 album is a thrash metal tour de force, featuring a complex, fast-paced ensemble arrangement with shifting tempos and time signatures, a multitude of intense, pummeling single-note and power chord riffs, tightly doubled by guitarists James Hetfield and Kirk Hammett, and a blistering, well-crafted solo from Hammett. Drummer Lars Ulrich and original bassist Cliff Burton turn in amazingly precise and powerful performances as well, lending the song a tight-fisted impact.

Hetfield and Hammett employ their celebrated down-picking technique throughout the song, the only exceptions being the 16th-note and eighth-note triplet rhythms, for which, out of technical necessity, they resort to alternate picking (down-up-down-up, etc.), unless hammering-on or pulling-off. When used in conjunction with pick-hand palm-muting (P.M.), which the two guitarists apply intermittently to their low strings during most of the song's riffs, the result is super-articulate, chunky-sounding note and chord attacks with short durations, which effectively frame and emphasize the unmuted, accented rhythms, lending the arrangement clarity and coherence, through all its twists and turns.

You'll notice that the chord shapes used are predominantly simple voicings, played on adjacent strings. There are a lot of quick two-note power chord shifts, a few of which are beyond two frets, specifically during the choruses (see sections H and N), which can be tricky to nail cleanly at tempo. When making the big, four-fret jumps in bars 64, 65, 139 and 140, try not to drag your fingers up and down the strings, but rather "hop" from chord to chord, with the fingers barely leaving the strings while applying a light palm mute to suppress unwanted noise.

Hammett makes fantastic use of whole-step bends ("full") in his solo at section K, as well as during the instrumental iteration of the song's chorus at section O. All of these bends are performed with the 3rd finger, supported one fret below by the 2nd finger, with the thumb hooking over the top side of the fretboard for leverage.

"THE WELL"
Marcus King

FEATURING HIS DISTINCTIVE, soulful singing and guitar playing style, this catchy, neo-traditional blues-rock shuffle from Marcus King showcases the popular young lion of Americana music's tasteful, inspired performance ethos and polished technique, touch and tone.

With his trusty Gibson ES-345 plugged into a vintage-style tube amp (probably a Fender or Orange head and cabinet), with a bit of pedal boost/overdrive/fuzz up front, King coaxes sweet, singing single-note lines from his ax and adorns many of his phrases with a smooth, cultured, Clapton-esque finger vibrato. The guitarist performs pretty much all his vibratos here by pushing the string upward (away from the palm), affecting a series of evenly spaced microbends (approximately a quarter tone) with either his 3rd or 1st finger, depending on his hand position, relative to the pentatonic "box" shape he's playing in. The one exception is the double-stop shake in bar 58, which King most likely executes with his 3rd and 2nd fingers bending the G and B strings in tandem, again using the pushing technique.

Although he performs the song live in standard tuning, in the key of E, on the studio recording King opted to tune his guitar down a whole step for his lead track (see the Gtr. 1 part), and play it as if the song were a whole step higher, in the key of F♯. So while the main riff that begins the song is based on the E blues scale (E, G, A, B♭, B, D) at concert pitch, for the Gtr. 1 part Marcus was thinking in terms of the F♯ blues scale (F♯, A, B, C, C♯, E). Likewise, for his solo at section D (bar 21), he was thinking "in E" while the accompanying Gtr. 2 part and bass are playing a riff based on the D blues scale (D, F, G, A♭, A, C).

King generally prefers to use .011-gauge string sets, which feel tighter under the fingers than .010s, and this may be why he chose to tune down a whole step in the studio — to get a slinkier feel for his bends and vibratos. When performing live, the added adrenaline of playing loud on stage in front of an audience no doubt gives his fingers extra energy for bending and shaking his .011-gauge strings in standard tuning.

"BE YOURSELF"
Audioslave

ONE OF AUDIOSLAVE'S most melodic and lyrically endearing songs, this alternative rock hit from the band's 2005 sophomore release, *Out of Exile,* features former Soundgarden frontman Chris Cornell's plaintive vocals backed by guitarist Tom Morello and his former Rage Against the Machine bandmates Tim Commerford and Brad Wilk on bass and drums, respectively.

As a rhythm section, Morello and company turn in a fairly understated but musically effective performance, with the guitarist employing a variety of tones, ranging from clean to slightly dirty to overdriven, and everyone collectively making expressive use of dynamic contrasts in volume and texture. Tom takes a very lyrical approach to his lead guitar parts, opting to play up and down a single string for the song's main verse accompaniment, which serves as a counter-melody to the vocals (see bars 5-12 and sections B and E), and using position shifts and finger slides, which sound expressive, especially with the added delay effect.

The guitarist takes the same single-string melody approach for the first part of his solo (section G), which is really more of a post-chorus melodic theme, traveling up and down the A string for the first eight bars before playing more conventional A minor pentatonic-based solo-type licks in the 5th-position "box" from bar 66 on. When playing these single-string lines, use whichever fretting fingers feel most convenient and sure-footed for any given note and slide.

Morello performs this song with a capo at the 2nd fret and as if it were in the key of A minor, with the capo transposing everything up a whole step to B minor. To avoid confusion, we've included both capo-2 and concert-key chord names throughout the arrangement, with the latter enclosed in brackets. Keep in mind that all guitar fret indications are relative to the capo and are actually two frets higher, or "+2." This visual adjustment is easy enough to make when playing near the capo but becomes trickier as you move farther away from it, as you become more inclined to visualize and think of the notes in the actual key that you're in.

"THE WELL"

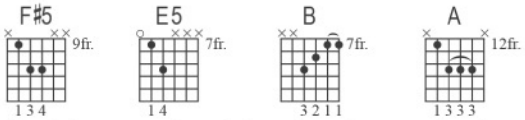
Marcus King

As heard on **EL DORADO**

Words and Music by MARCUS KING, DANIEL QUINE AUERBACH *and* RONNIE BOWMAN • *Transcribed by* JEFF PERRIN

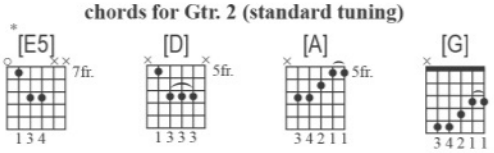
Guitar 1 is tuned down one whole step (low to high: D, G, C, F, A, D).
Guitar 2 is in standard tuning (low to high: E, A, D, G, B, E).
5-string Bass is in standard tuning (low to high: B, E, A, D, G).

chords for Gtr. 1 (tuned down one whole step)



All notes and chords for Gtr. 1 sound one whole step lower than written (key of E minor).

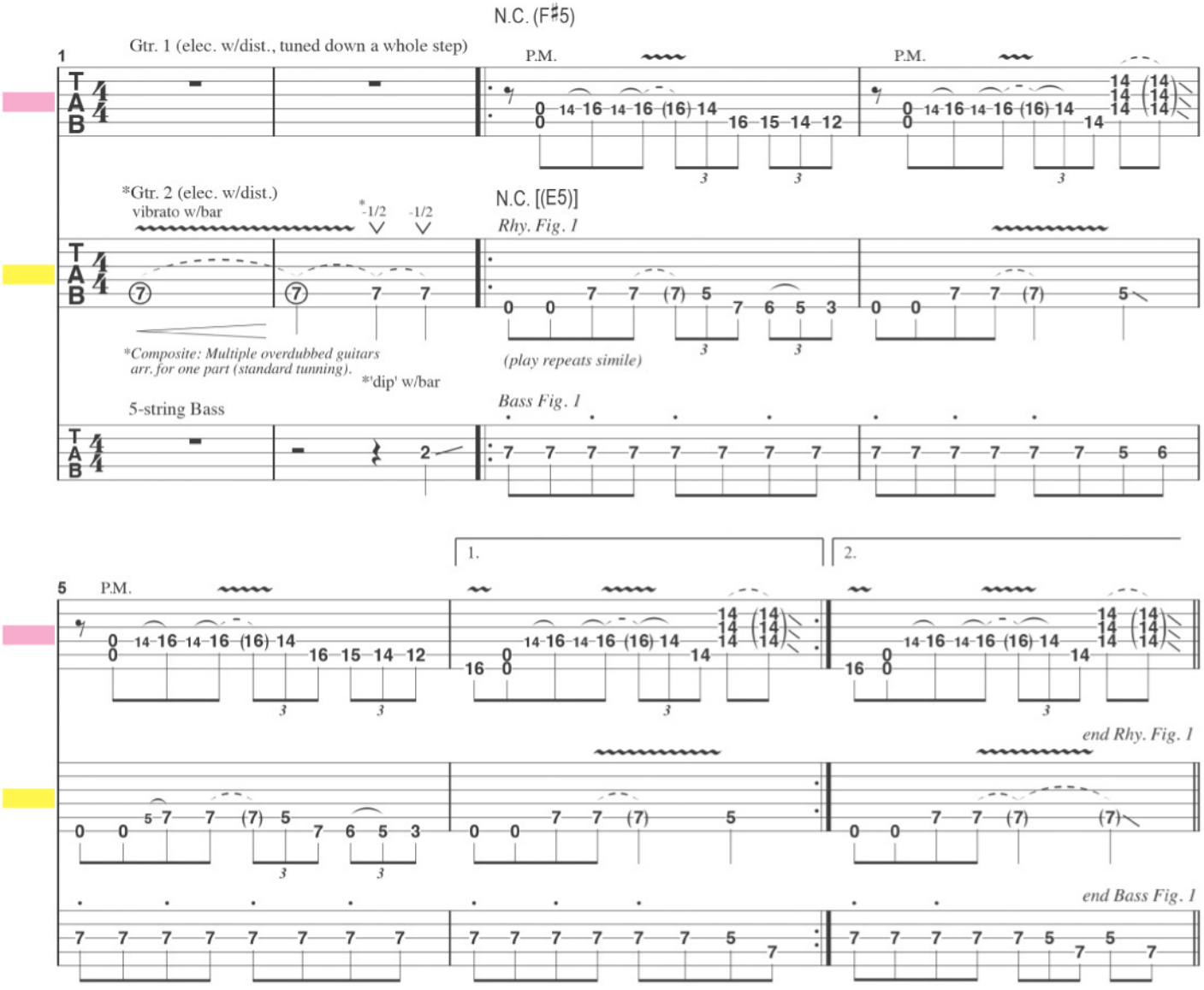
chords for Gtr. 2 (standard tuning)



**Chord symbols in brackets indicate concert key harmony throughout (key of E minor).*

A Intro (0:00) (0:04)

Moderate Shuffle ♩ = 120 (♫ = ♩³♪)



"THE WELL"
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B **Verses** (0:19, 0:51, 1:51)

1. I was just a young'n bouncin' on my mama's knee Said son there's only one thing that sets your soul free
2. Papa was a preachin' 'bout the fires of hell (If) you want a drink of water got to go to the well The
(3.) spirit pull me under to the bottom of the well You wanna live forever but you never can tell So

(F♯5)

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

fdbk.

(play repeats simile)

**Omit note on 3rd verse.*

(1st verse) pitch: B
(2nd verse) pitch: E

[E5]

Bass

2nd verse, skip ahead to **D** *Guitar Solo (bar 21)*

3rd verse, skip ahead to **G** *Outro Guitar Solo (bar 43)*

Wasn't no easy street where I come from There wasn't no sleep until the work was done
cornerstone church tried to curse my soul But the good Lord give me that rock and roll
one for the money Two another show Three for the Father Son and Holy Ghost

F♯5

Gtr. 1

[E5]

Gtr. 2

Bass

**Omit note on 2nd verse.*

C (0:35)

N.C. (F♯5)

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 3)

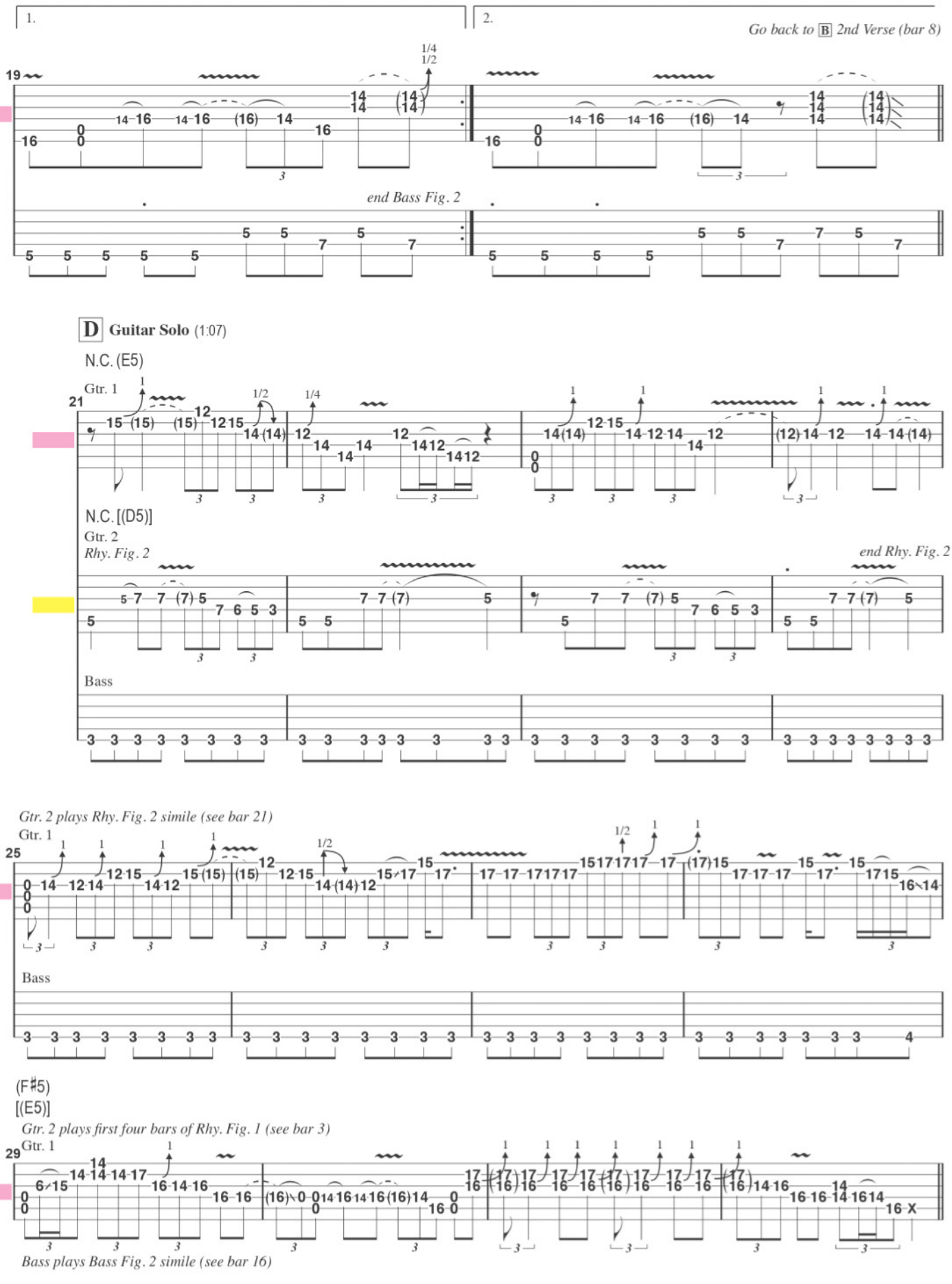
Gtr. 1

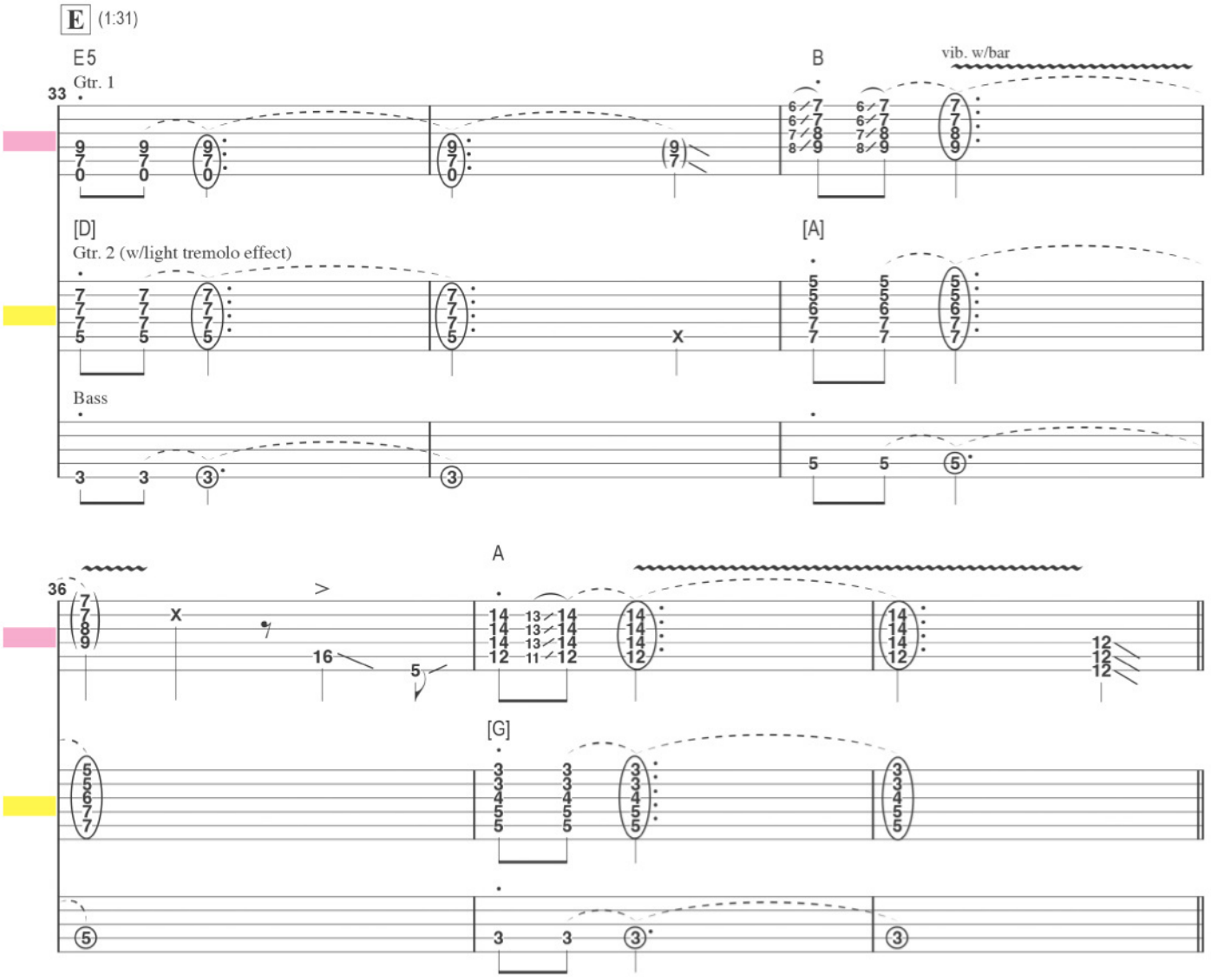
P.M.

N.C. [(E5)]

Bass

Bass Fig. 2


1.
2.
Go back to B 2nd Verse (bar 8)
end Bass Fig. 2
D Guitar Solo (1:07)
N.C. (E5)
Gtr. 1
N.C. [(D5)]
Gtr. 2
Rhy. Fig. 2
end Rhy. Fig. 2
Bass
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 simile (see bar 21)
Gtr. 1
Bass
(F♯5)
[(E5)]
Gtr. 2 plays first four bars of Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 3)
Gtr. 1
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 simile (see bar 16)



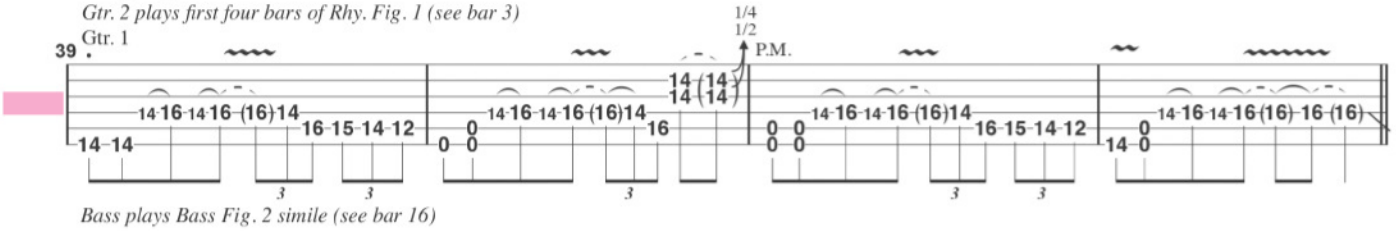
F (1:43)

Go back to B 3rd Verse (bar 8)

N.C. (F♯5)
[(E5)]

3. Let the

Gtr. 2 plays first four bars of Rhy. Fig. 1 (see bar 3)

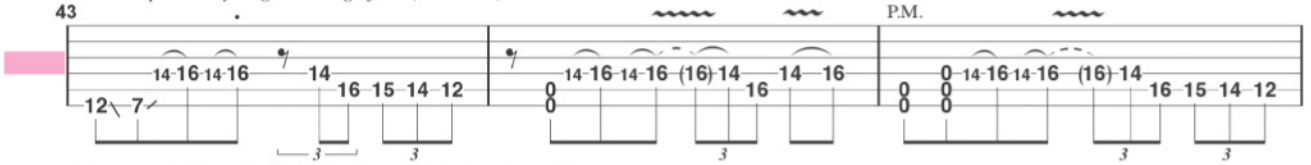


Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 simile (see bar 16)

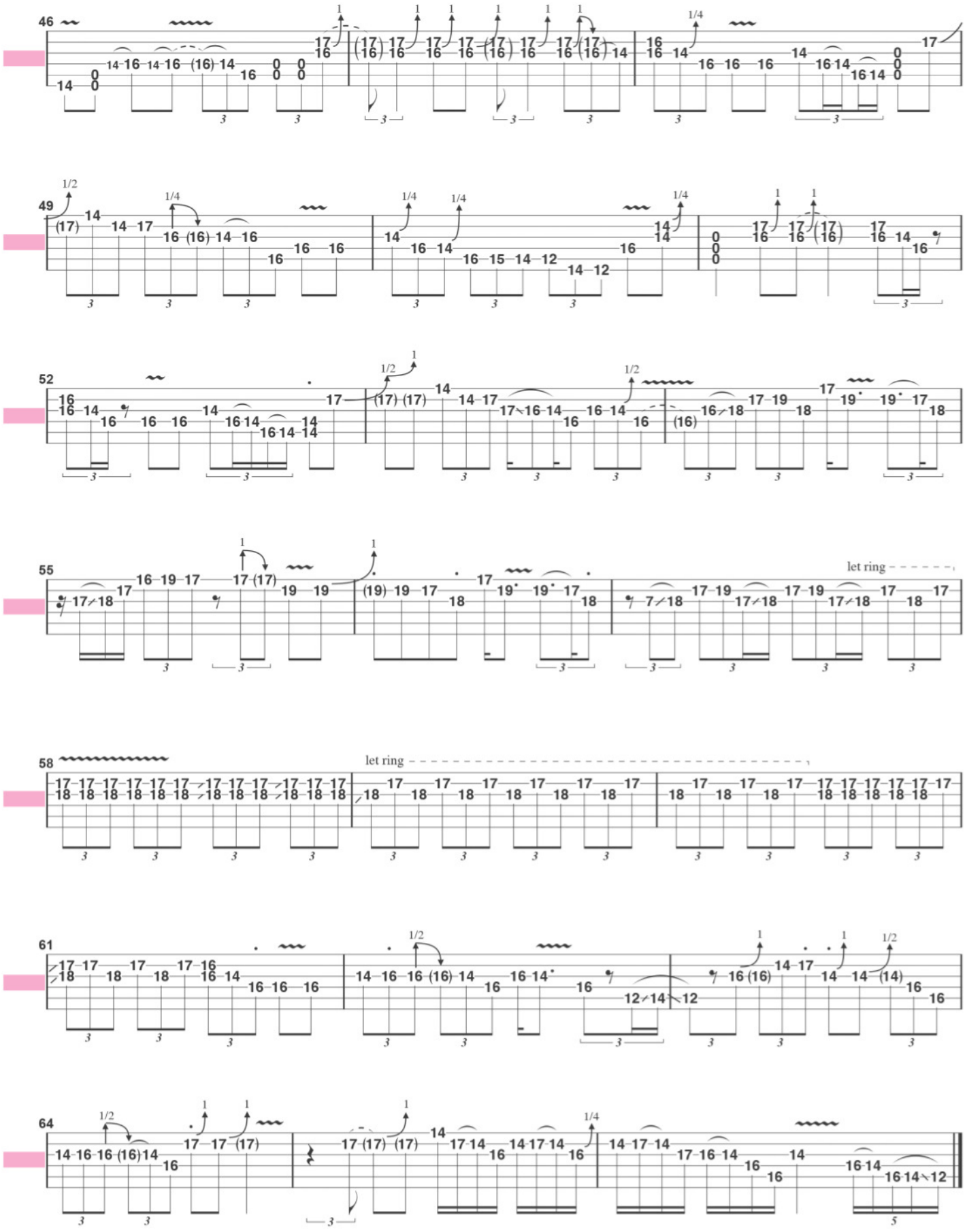
G Outro Guitar Solo (2:07)

N.C. (F♯5)
[(E5)]

Gtr. 2 repeats Rhy. Fig. 1 through fade (see bar 3)



Bass repeats Bass Fig. 2 simile, through fade (see bar 16)


46
49
52
55
let ring
58
let ring
61
64

"BE YOURSELF"

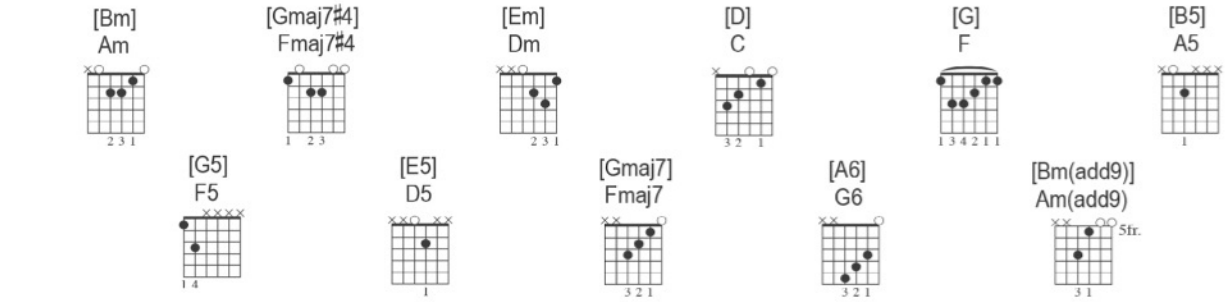
Audioslave

As heard on **OUT OF EXILE**

Words and Music by THOMAS MORELLO, BRAD WILK, TIM COMMERFORD *and* CHRIS CORNELL • *Transcribed by* JEFF PERRIN

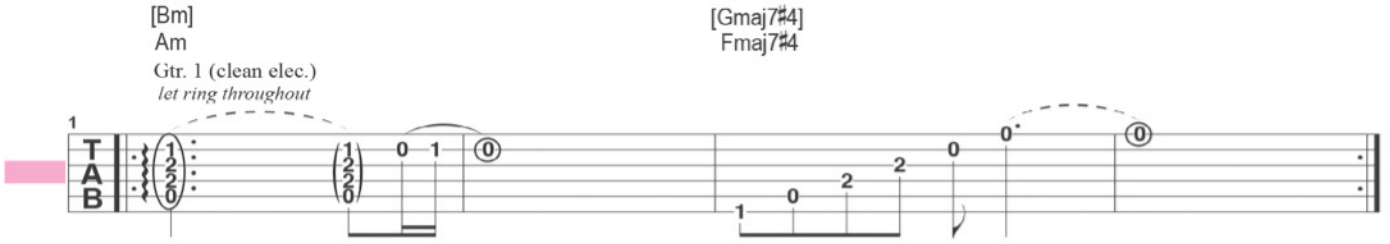
All guitars are capo-ed at the 2nd fret.

All chord shapes and guitar tablature positions are relative to the capo ("0" = 2nd fret).
All guitar parts sound in the key of B minor, one whole step higher than written.
Bracketed chord names indicate concert-key harmony (for bass and vocals).



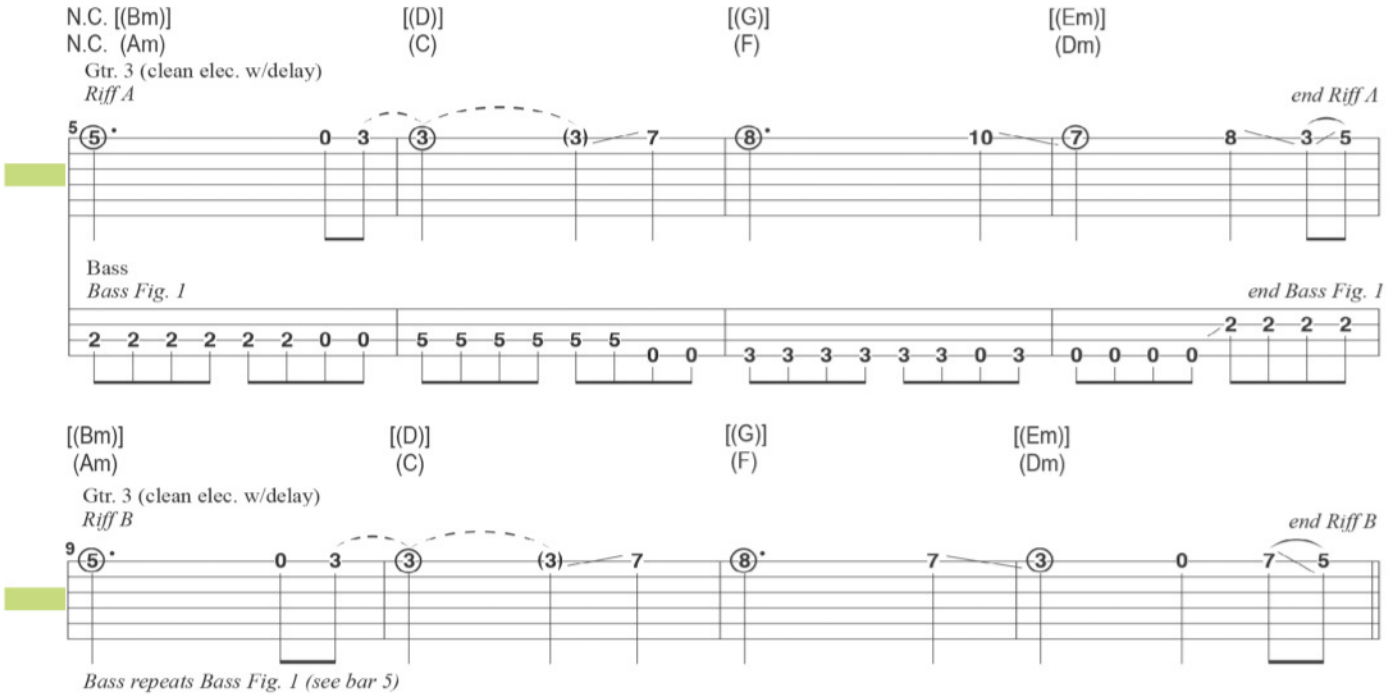
A **Intro** (0:00)

Freely



(0:17)

Moderately ♩ = 114

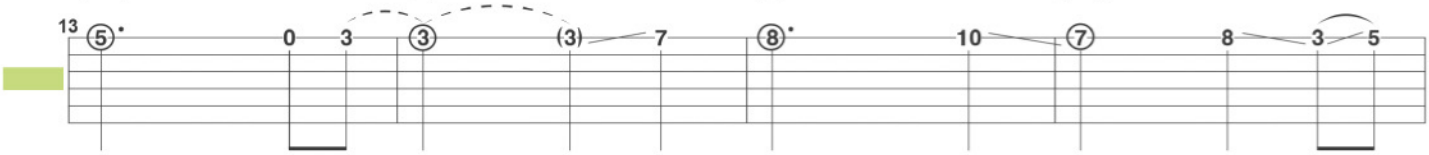


"BE YOURSELF"
WRITTEN BY THOMAS MORELLO (BMI), BRAD WILK (BMI), TIM COMMERFORD (BMI) AND CHRIS CORNELL. PUBLISHED BY LBV SONGS (BMI), ME THREE PUBLISHING (BMI), MELEE SAVVY MUSIC (BMI).

B **1st Verse** (0:33)

Someone falls to pieces sleepin' all alone Someone kills the pain

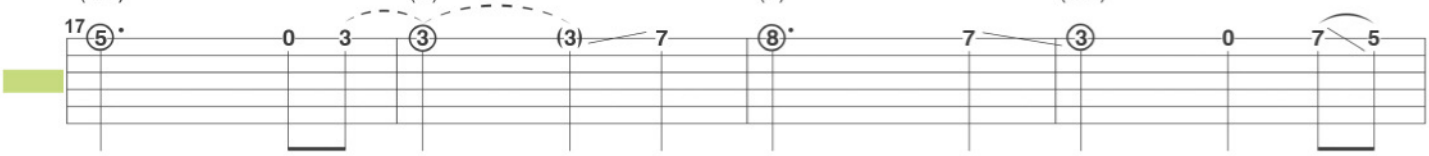
[(Bm)] [(D)] [(G)] [(Em)]
(Am) (C) (F) (Dm)



Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 5)

Spinnin' in the silence She finally drifts away

[(Bm)] [(D)] [(G)] [(Em)]
(Am) (C) (F) (Dm)

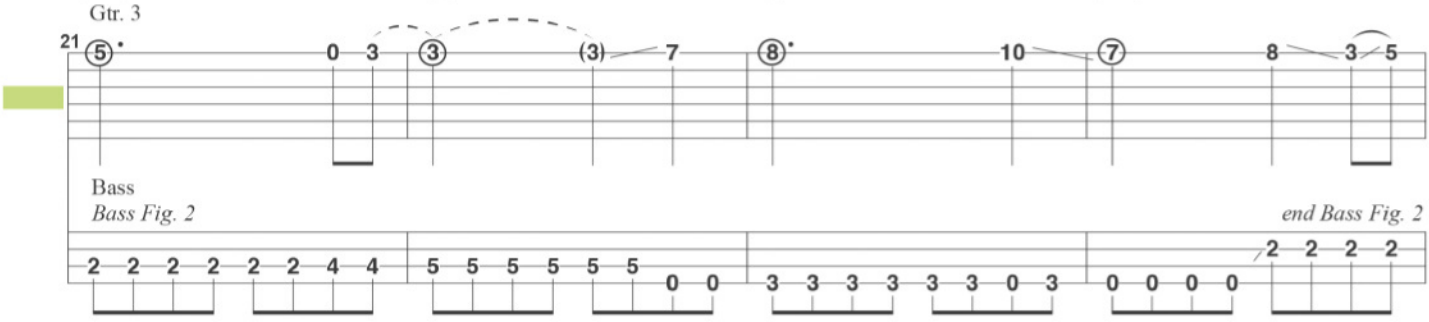


Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 5)

Someone gets excited in a chapel yard and catches a bouquet

[(Bm)] [(D)] [(G)] [(Em)]
(Am) (C) (F) (Dm)

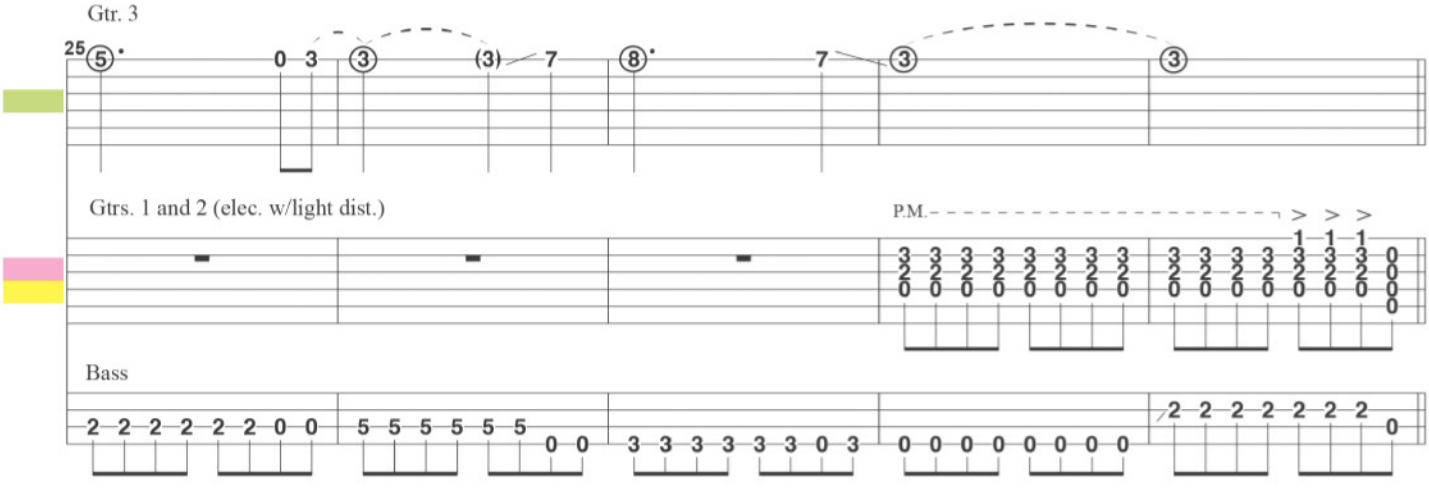
Gtr. 3



Another lays a dozen white roses on a grave Yeah And to

[(Bm)] [(D)] [(G)] [Em]
(Am) (C) (F) Dm

Gtr. 3



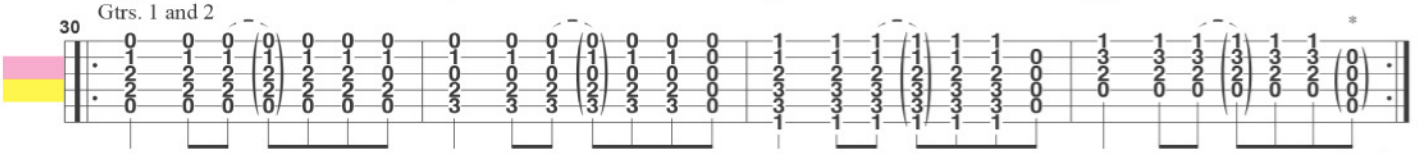
C **1st Chorus** (1:09)

be yourself is all that you can do hey To
be yourself is all that you can do oh

[Bm] [D] [G] [Em]
Am C F Dm

Gtrs. 1 and 2

30



Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 5)

**play 1st time only*

D (1:25)

[B5] [D] [G5] [E5]
A5 C F5 D5

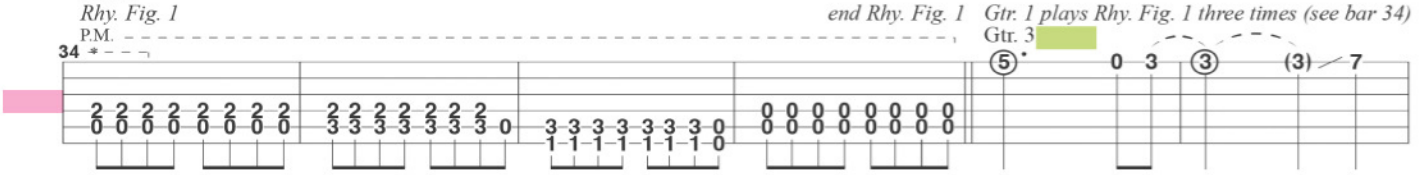
Gtr. 3 plays Riff B (see bar 9)

Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fig. 1 *end Rhy. Fig. 1*

P.M.

34



** First three chord strums played only when Rhy. Fig. 1 is recalled during 2nd verse.*

E **2nd Verse** (1:33)

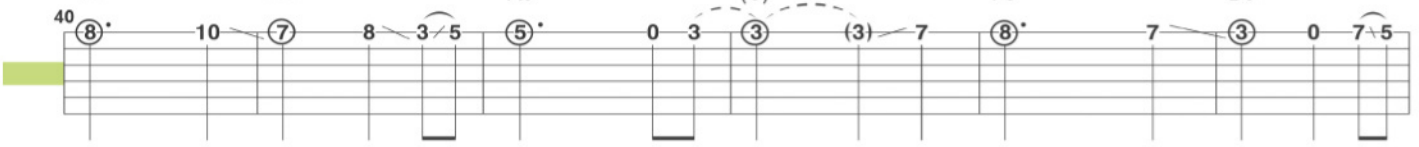
Someone finds salvation in
[B5] [(D)]
A5 (C)

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 three times (see bar 34)

Gtr. 3

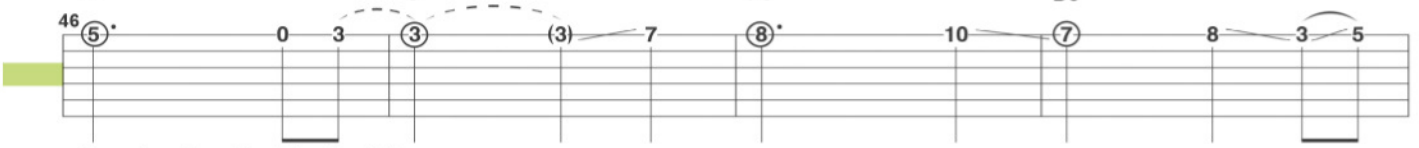
everyone Another only pain Someone tries to hide himself Down inside himself he prays
[G5] [E5] [B5] [(D)] [G5] [E5]
F5 D5 A5 (C) F5 D5

40



Someone swears his true love until the end of time Another runs away
[B5] [D] [G5] [E5]
A5 C F5 D5

46

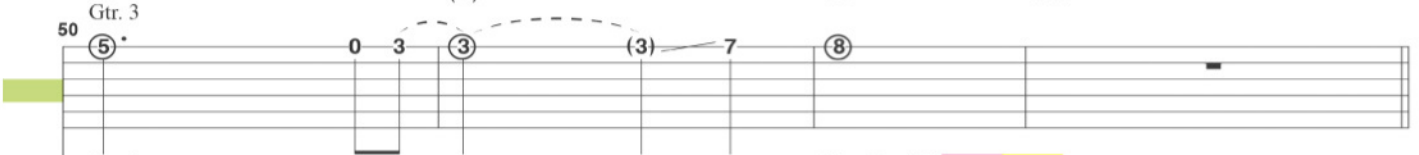


Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 (see bar 21)

Separate or united Healthy or insane And to
[B5] [(D)] [G5] [Em]
A5 (C) F5 Dm

Gtr. 3

50

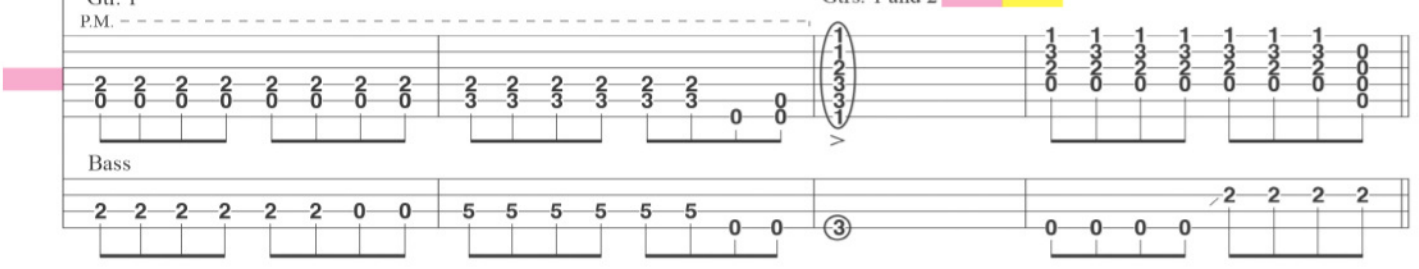


Gtr. 1

P.M.

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

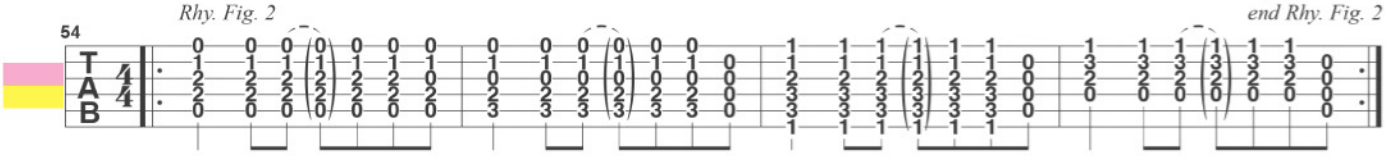


F 2nd Chorus (2:07)

(1, 2, 3) be yourself is all that you can do hey To
(All that you can do)
(4) be yourself is all that you can do ooh

[Bm] [D] [G] [Em]
Am C F Dm

Gtrs. 1 and 2
Rhy. Fig. 2 *(play 4 times)*
end Rhy. Fig. 2

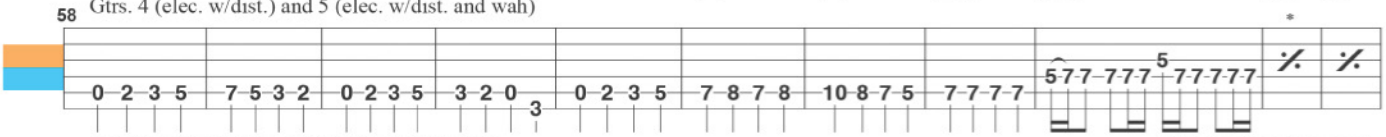


Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 four times (see bar 5)

G Guitar Solo (2:40)

N.C. [(Bm)] [(D)] [(G)] [(Em)] [(Bm)] [(D)] [(G)] [(Em)] [(Bm)] [(D)] [(G)]
(Am) (C) (F) (Dm) (Am) (C) (F) (Dm) (Am) (C) (F)

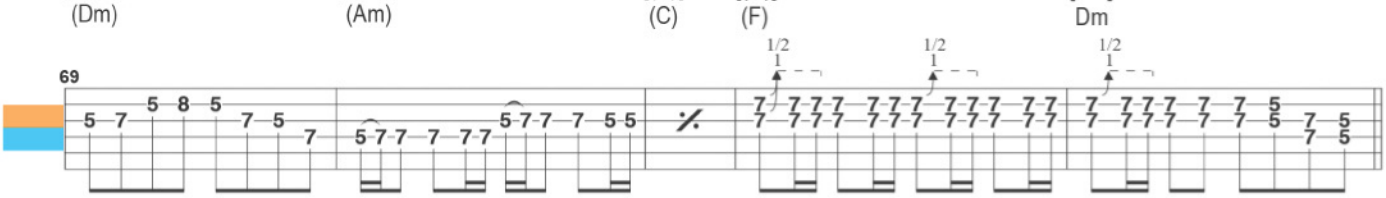
Gtrs. 4 (elec. w/dist.) and 5 (elec. w/dist. and wah)



Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 four times (see bar 21)

** (repeat previous. bar)*

[(Em)] [(Bm)] [(D)] [(G)] [Em]
(Dm) (Am) (C) (F) Dm



H Bridge (3:12)

Even when you're paid enough been put upon or been held up

[Gmaj7] [A6] [Bm(add9)]
Fmaj7 G6 Am(add9) N.C.

Gtrs. 4 and 5

Gtrs. 1 and 2
let ring throughout
Rhy. Fig. 3 *end Rhy. Fig. 3*

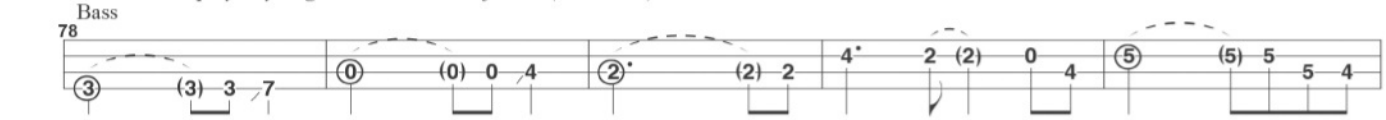
Bass

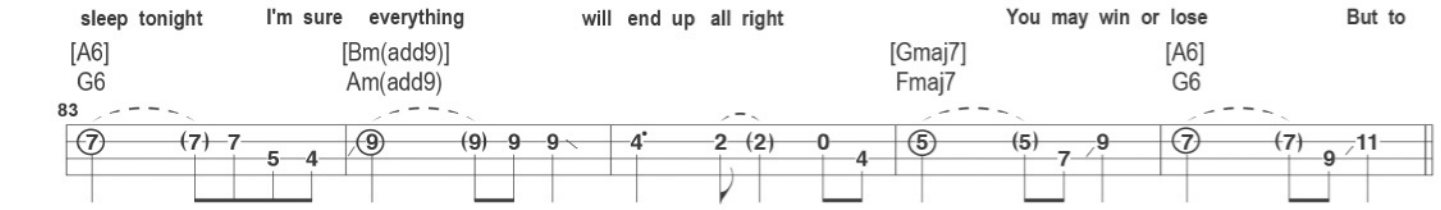
Every single memory of the good or bad faces of love Don't lose any

[Gmaj7] [A6] [Bm(add9)] [Gmaj7]
Fmaj7 G6 Am(add9) Fmaj7

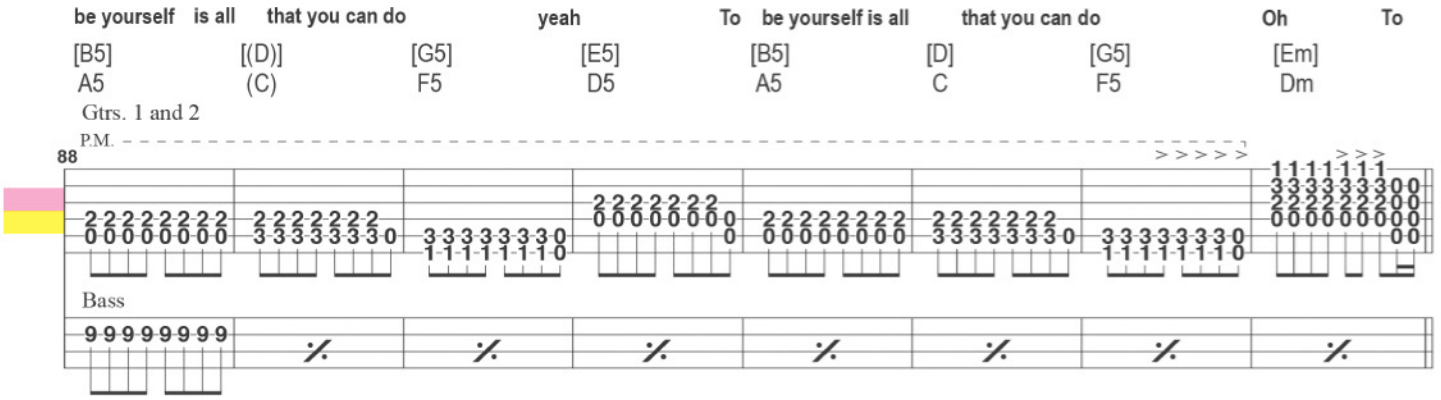
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 3 two and one half times (see bar 74)

Bass

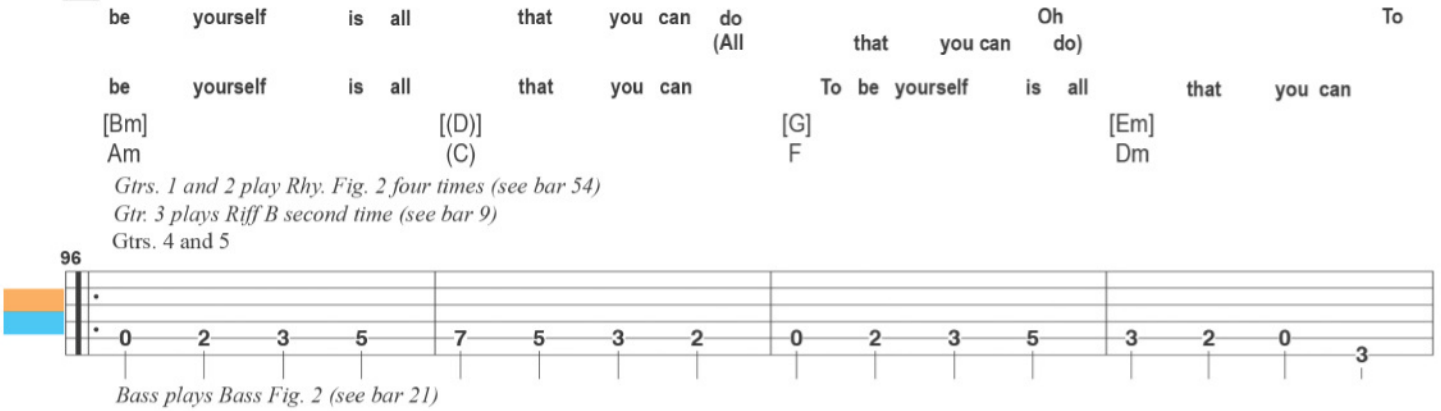


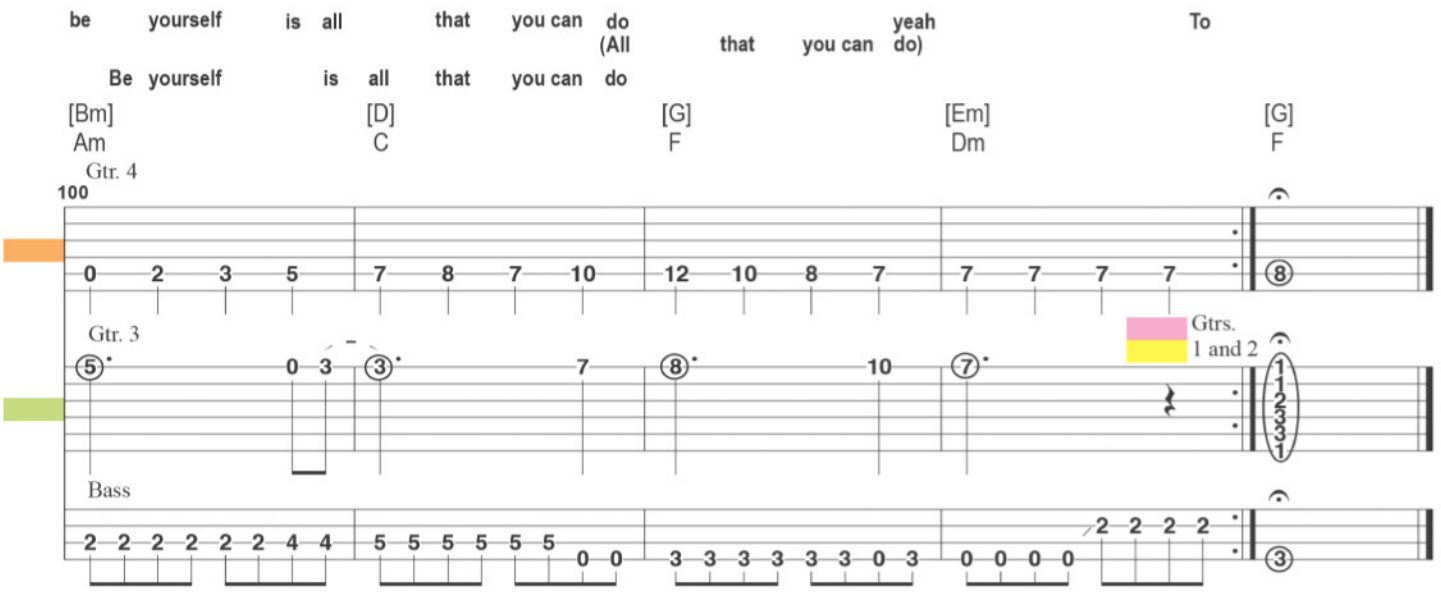


I Breakdown (3:40)



J Outro Chorus (3:56)





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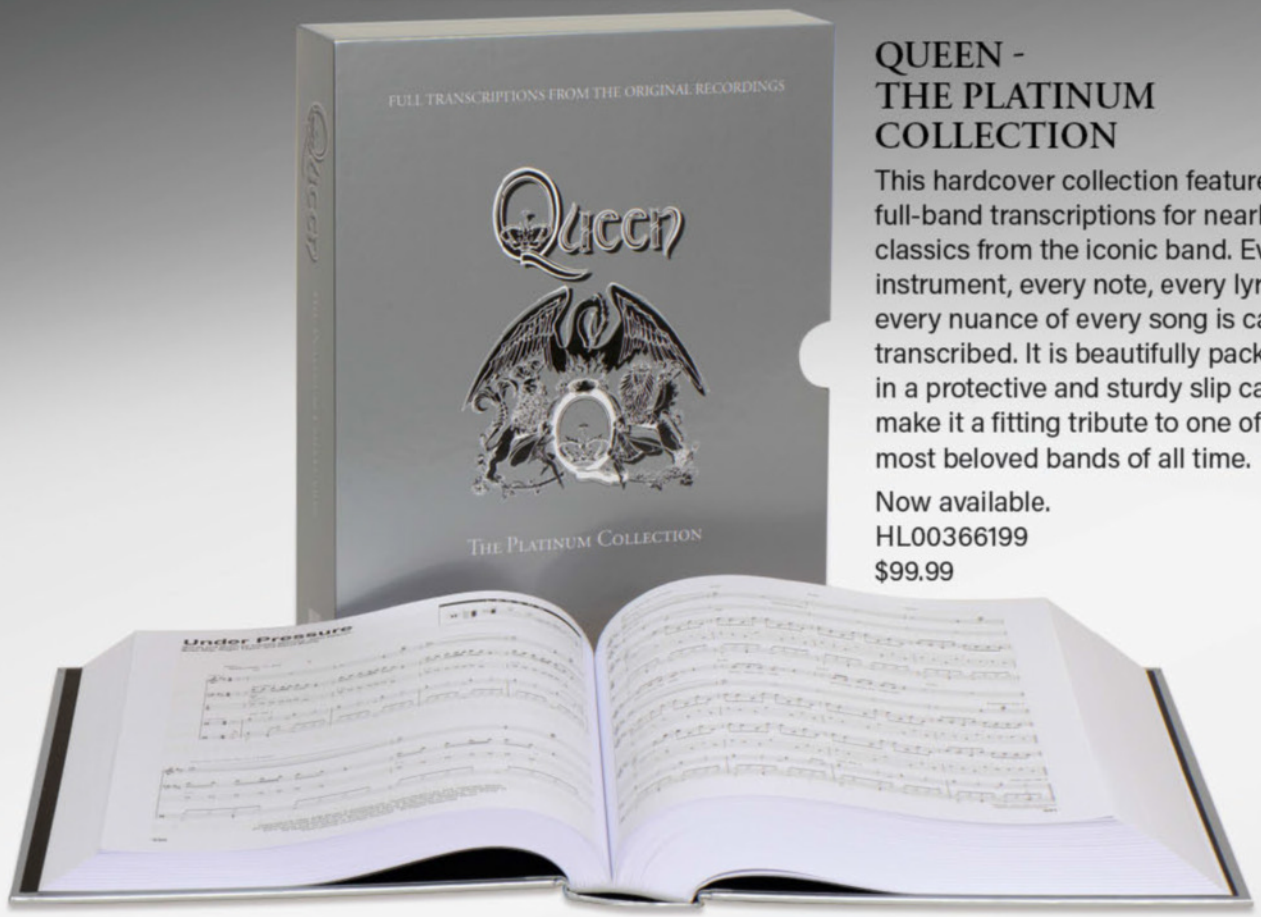

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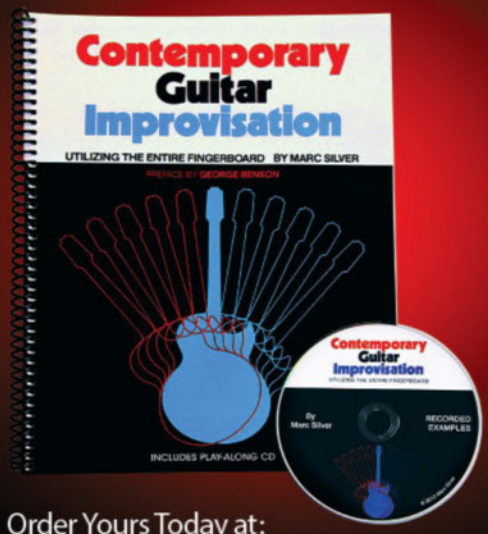

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BY CHRIS GILL

C. 1967-PRESENT GUILD F-412 AND F-512 JUMBO 12-STRING ACOUSTICS

CATEGORY: 12-STRING ACOUSTIC

I PERSONALLY CONSIDER the Guild jumbo 12-string acoustic one of the greatest engineering feats of the 20th century, right up there with electricity, the vacuum tube, personal computer, interstate highway, space shuttle, jet airplane, television, etc. Sure, it may simply be a flattop acoustic guitar model developed rather late in the game during the Sixties, but to many players the Guild jumbo 12-string is to the acoustic guitar what a Steinway Model D concert grand is to the piano.

Jimmy Page rather eloquently described his first encounter with a Guild jumbo 12 (a very rare early Seventies F-612 model) in his book *Jimmy Page—The Anthology*: "I was in Manny's guitar shop in New York when the guy working there said, 'There's a guitar here you'll want to buy, a Guild 12-string.' I told him that I already had a 12-string Harmony, but he insisted: 'No, you'll want to buy this.' He went to the other side of the shop, which was quite a considerable distance, played a few chords on it, and the sound projected right across the shop. There was no question about it. I should have it."

Many guitarists have a similar reaction when they first play a Guild jumbo 12. Guild produced various jumbo 12 guitars over the years, including the F-212 and its larger XL variant, F-312, JF30-12, JF55-12 and JF65-12, but the 17-inch F-412 (arched maple back, maple neck and maple sides) and F-512 (rosewood back and sides, mahogany neck) models along with the mammoth and virtually unobtainable 18-inch F-612 model are generally considered the go-to versions. Guild foreman Carlo Greco deserves credit for most of the jumbo 12's design. Over the years Guild survived several changes of ownership along with numerous factory relocations, including Hoboken (New Jersey), Westerly (Rhode Island), Corona (California), Tacoma (Washington), New Hartford (Connecticut) and Oxnard (California). Cordoba purchased Guild in 2015, and with initial guidance from former Gibson acoustic master luthier Ren Ferguson the company is producing USA and import versions that rival the classics.

"The sound projected right across the shop. There was no question about it. I should have it" — Jimmy Page

Several ingenious attributes help make the Guild jumbo 12-string an impressive feat of engineering. The truly jumbo 17-inch wide, five-inch deep body delivers incredibly loud volume projection, and the top's scalloped braces are meticulously refined and finely tuned to provide an ideal balance between strength, dynamic responsiveness and flexibility. The neck has a rather long 25 5/8-inch scale length, but the wide and flat profile provides outstanding comfort and playability, and its dual truss rods (one of the first guitars to feature this design) keep the neck stable and straight even with the strings' added tension. This all results in bass that is big, booming and powerful without interfering with the sweet harmonics and cut of treble notes or the midrange punch and personality. The overall tone is huge and symphonic, which has made Guild jumbo 12s very popular with singer/songwriters like Simon and Garfunkel, John Denver, Tim Buckley, Dan Fogelberg and many others.

Classic tunes featuring a Guild jumbo 12 include Led Zeppelin's "Over the Hills and Far Away," Supertramp's "Give a Little Bit," John Denver's "Rhymes and Reasons" and Stevie Ray Vaughan's "Testify" (and several other songs) from his *MTV Unplugged* performance. More recently, Brian May switched to Guild F-412 and F-512 guitars when performing "39" live, and David Gilmour has adopted an F-512 to play "Wish You Were Here" to replace the Martin D12-28 he used in the studio.

A Guild F-512 jumbo 12-string acoustic, photographed in 2013

JOBY SESSIONS/FUTURE

TONE TIP

The 25 5/8-inch scale length can result in considerable string tension with a set of regular-gauge strings in standard. Tuning down a half or whole step or using light gauge strings is recommended for added comfort without sacrificing projection and tone.

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